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International Handbook of Leadership for Learning

Part 1

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Editors

With Thuwayba Al-Barwani, Beatrice Avalos, Ira Bogotch, Vitallis Chikoko, Neil Dempster, Lejf Moos, Jim O'Brien, Larry Sackney, and Allan Walker

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To those who are working towards improving the quality of learning in countries around the world, and to our wives, Juli and Sandra, who have let us visit many of these places. We recognize how lucky we are.

Preface

The term 'Leadership for Learning' has taken currency in the past decade, but the two constituent terms 'leadership' and 'learning' have been around for much longer; however, both have taken on a more prominent position in the last 20 years or so.

'Learning', as it applied in schools for many years, was the poor partner of 'teaching', with the term 'teaching and learning' being the usual terminology for what was supposed to happen in schools. Learning was inevitably tied to teaching and we focused more on what and how things were taught than we did on whether or not they were learned. We recognised that not every time teaching happened, learning followed, but for many years, this did not seem to matter. Students were categorised and sorted based on their level of being able to understand what the teacher told you, but there were plenty of jobs to go around and some of them did not require too much 'lernin' for you to be successful at them.

However, the past two decades saw a number of things happen. First, the jobs that only required low levels of achievement at school started to disappear, replaced by changes in technology and attitudes, and what was left for those that were not adept at learning was very limited in satisfying the needs in an increasingly consumer-oriented society. Second, we started to get to know about the brain and how it works so much better, with consequent understandings of how learning happened, how it might be maximised and supported. Third, we started to measure learning rather than teaching and we started to tell the world how well students might learn (measured in the limited and limiting realm of standardised tests) at international, national and even local forums. These three things together changed our focus from 'teaching and learning' to 'learning and teaching' with the emphasis placed more firmly on coming up with a range of teaching strategies that would support student learning than on simply presenting the curriculum and hoping for the best.

'Leadership' too has come along in leaps and bounds in the past 20 years. Fifty years ago, we talked about management or administration as the key concepts associated with running an organisation such as a school. However, management seems to have been identified in recent times as being a constraining term, one associated with ensuring conformity, uniformity and stasis. Leadership came along as the alternative to these things. Leadership was focused on change, development and movement. Management got a bad name. Yet we do recognise that the best managers have all the qualities of a leader, because even conformity and uniformity these

days involve change and development, and the best leaders all have to manage well, as we cannot really take our organisations forward if we ignore the day-to-day running requirements of the machine. Just ignore purchasing toilet paper for a month and see how far leadership takes you.

So now these two terms come together and just as sometimes we get confused about the differences and nuances of leadership and management and teaching and learning, now we can be doubly confused about what the two things mean when they are put together.

What this international handbook tries to do is to untangle the meaning of this term from some others that are used sometimes alongside it, like 'instructional leadership'. On the surface, these two terms 'Instructional Leadership' and 'Leadership for Learning' seem like they might be approaching the same thing from different ends, instructional leadership sounds like it is leading instruction or teaching, whereas leadership for learning sounds like it is leading learning. Are the two the same or different? It is clear that sometimes we have instruction without learning and we also sometimes have learning without instruction.

To try and get a better understanding of the state of the art of 'Leadership for Learning', we sought the help of nine colleagues from around the world, each of whom came from a distinct region that had their own culture of schooling. Ira Bogotch, from the USA, Larry Sackney from Canada and Beatrice Avalos from Chile, provided our selections from North and Latin America; Jim O'Brien from Scotland and Lejf Moos from Denmark sought inputs from the United Kingdom and Europe, Allan Walker from Hong Kong and Neil Demspter from Australia covered the Asian and Pacific countries and Vitallis Chikoko and Thuwayba Al-Barwani invited people from Africa and the Middle East to contribute.

We asked our regional editors to seek chapters from their regions that covered what we considered to be the key themes for discovering what leadership for learning might mean, and we have categorised these into eight different sections of the handbook: major themes; conceptual and theoretical understandings; system and policy issues; educating school leaders, both through formal education programmes and through in-service and professional development; supporting the development of this new concept (Leadership for Learning) in currently practising school leaders; spreading it to others in the school; and finally, taking account of diversity and the specific contexts in which leaders operate.

The result is 66 chapters from authors from 31 countries in the nine regions of the world that the regional editors come from. What has been collected in this handbook provides us with a thorough understanding of how people interpret the term 'leadership for learning', if not a complete understanding of the term itself. For what we know about learning is that it is a never ending process and what we know now will never be complete as what we know in the future. It is also true that learning is the pathway to this future.

We hope that, in some limited way, this volume provides people with some leadership towards learning more about 'leadership for learning'.

Tony Townsend and John MacBeath

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Chapter 1
Leadership and Learning: Paradox, Paradigms and Principles

John MacBeath and Tony Townsend

Introduction

Leadership and learning are words so familiar to us that they have become what the French term 'faux amis', false friends, leading us down false trails and into conceptual cul-de-sacs. Learning is what happens in schools and leadership is something that many aspire to but only a few larger than life individuals ever achieve. So saturated are these terms with common understanding, how can we see them anew, as it were for the first time?

To compound matters the phrase 'Leadership for Learning' has entered the vocabulary. Its ambiguity is to be found in the simple, yet highly complex conjunction which unites both big ideas. It merits some careful deconstruction, a task which, as editors, we have created for ourselves. In bringing together scholarly contributions from around the world, our aim was less to arrive at a common definition than to exemplify how understandings are shaped and reshaped within various cultural contexts and discursive practices. How do powerful ideas travel, and as they travel how do they acquire new identities and new forms of expression?

Lejf Moos uses the term 'cultural isomorphs' to refer to concepts that are deceptively similar but essentially different, that look alike but are actually structured of quite different elements. So, countries such as Denmark find themselves not only adopting the language but also its underlying constructs, often erecting a barrier to an understanding of the essential differences that lie beneath the words. As English is the language of scholarly debate it can easily 'overshadow linguistic nuances in how the term is being defined, discussed and understood' (Proitz 2010: 135). In Norwegian, the term *laeringsutbytte* stands in for learning outcomes but carries

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quite different connotations for a Norwegian speaker. In Italian, French or Spanish, different nuances of meaning require sensitive interpretation. Even the sharing of a common language, however, does not vouchsafe common understanding. Bernard Shaw is attributed with the statement that the USA and Britain are 'divided by a common language', and while the original source is disputed, it nonetheless highlights the danger of assuming that words carry the same meaning to different audiences. A dramatic illustration of this is contained in the river deep website on language

> Imagine an American investor speaking to a British CEO: "I think we can manage a \$1.5 billion investment in your company." The British CEO is going to be very surprised when the check (sic) has three fewer zeroes than expected! (http://web.riverdeep.net/current/ 2001/03/032001_language.jhtml)

Drawing as it does on policy and practice across the world, the reader of this book will be frequently stopped short by language which may be all too familiar and yet troublesome in its use or connotation. Jacobson and Johnson (in Chap. 31) offer a health warning to the reader, writing that 'cross-national comparisons remind us that theory and praxis in educational leadership and management are socially constructed and contextually bound'. They add, 'Our analyses of differences across national contexts underscore the role of varying ideological orientations and policy contexts in the day-to-day practice of successful school principals'.

Ideological orientations are nowhere more apparent than in relation to leadership. 'Leadership' is one of those big ideas that has travelled across continents, its meaning in differing cultures deceptively similar but essentially different. The subtlety of these distinctions may, as Daniel Muijs points out (Chap. 9), escape policy makers who display an unfortunate impatience to move straight to prescription, potentially at its most harmful 'where the research base is from an entirely different (cultural) context, where school leadership will operate under different circumstances and conditions'.

What assumptions are brought to what is 'seen' and the way in which it is judged? Czarniawska (1997) coins the term 'outsidedness' to infuse what is seen with a critical, and distancing, eye. 'It aims at understanding not by identification ('they are like us') but by the recognition of differences' (p. 62). 'Interculturality' is a term used to refer to the capacity to experience and analyse cultural otherness, and to use this experience to reflect on matters that are usually taken for granted within one's own culture and environment' (Council of Europe 2009: 10). It requires, 'a readiness to decentre our perspectives and enter into a dialogue with others and their perceptions, and a true desire to negotiate our understandings' (Brotto in Chap. 63).

Building on and extending Hofstede's work in cultural dimensions (see for example Hofstede 1991), the GLOBE study encompassing 62 countries (House et al. 2004) identified aspects of leadership which not only appeared to be universal but also had significantly different orientations in the Middle East, Asia, Latin Europe and Germanic Europe, for example.

> The study of culture and leadership underscores the complexity of the leadership process and how it is influenced by culture. Data from the GLOBE study highlight the need for

each of us to expand out ethnocentric tendencies to view leadership from only our own perspective and to 'open our window' to the diverse ways in which leadership is viewed by people from different regions around the world. (Northouse 2007: 32)

The term 'leadership' and the baggage it carries within it has often to fit uncomfortably into the educational lexicon in countries where the word has no equivalent and its meaning is hard to grasp. In Germany and Austria, recent history suggests that the 'leader' (der Fuhrer) is a notion that has had to be treated with caution. In Nordic countries, it smacks of something alien to a democratic society. The antipathy to individual leadership is deeply embedded in Nordic history and folklore, as an apocryphal tale of a French invasion of Denmark has it, in which the following dialogue took place:

Where is your leader?
    We are from Denmark. We have no leader. We are all leaders.

The Leadership Discourse

When did 'leadership' enter the educational vocabulary and successfully invade even the Nordic countries? It may be said that educational literature, and in its wake educational policy, came late to apply to schooling. Although there was literature on educational leadership in the 1970s and 1980s it was not until the 1990s that the interest in leadership really began to gather momentum. Chairs and centres were established in universities, new journals were created or renamed, development programmes were introduced and government departments began to pick up on the emerging trend. In England this watershed was marked by the opening in 2002 of the purpose built National College for School Leadership, growing to become a multimillion pound enterprise.

The renaming of journals and management centres tells its own story. 'Management' no longer captured the Zeitgeist, the movement of ideas away from 'managing' a school with all the connotations that evokes to 'leading' a school – a visionary, forward looking and inspirational venture. The qualities of leadership have proved harder to pin down than the less elusive functions of management, but have, nonetheless, proved a rich and growing seam of literature.

As profiles, trait theories, categories of competencies (and competences) have proliferated so has an accompanying critique. Zaccaro (2001), for example, has argued that to focus on a small set of individual attributes neglects cognitive abilities, motives, values, social skills and implicit expertise. Further, it is argued, such a focus fails to consider patterns or integrations of multiple attributes, behavioural diversity and does not distinguish between attributes that are generally not malleable over time and those that are shaped by situational factors, unpredictability and the dynamics of a changing society.

In comparison with the attempt to define successful leadership, little work has been carried out on ineffective leaders except as the counterpoint to what is judged

to be effective. One such comparison in the USA (Krug et al. 1990) found little difference between the activities of effective and ineffective principals but concluded that the meanings they attributed to their activities were significantly different. They concluded that 'the way a principal interprets a particular activity (beliefs) [is] of primary importance in explaining differences between effective and less effective principals' (p. 2). While this is a finding that may not receive wide support, particularly from a behaviourist perspective, there is also evidence to support the half full or half empty glass theory – the difference between 'problems' and 'challenges', as Bolman and Deal's (1991) seminal studies on framing and reframing demonstrate.

Whether it is a question of values, behaviours or competences these do not necessarily travel well. For example, while Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) found that although some traits were common across a number of studies, there was strong enough evidence to suggest that leaders in one situation may not necessarily be effective leaders in other situations. In similar vein contingency theorists such as Bossert and his colleagues (1982) have argued that no single style of management is necessarily appropriate for all schools, concluding that 'principals must find the style and structures most suited to their own local situation… certain principal behaviours have different effects in different organizational settings. Such findings confirm the contingency approach to organizational effectiveness found in current leadership theories' (Bossert et al. 1982: 38). Stogdill was later to moderate his earlier stance to lay greater emphasis on the interplay of competences and situational factors.

Common to this stream of literature, however, is the concerted focus on the 'big leader'. As David Frost has argued (Chap. 48 in this volume) 'The language chosen – in particular the constant use of the word 'leader' – is inhibiting and reinforces the assumption that it is about special people with particular role designations and authority bestowed by officialdom'. The constant assumption of leadership as exercised 'at the apex of the organisational pyramid' (Murphy 2000) is exemplified in McKinsey's 'War for Talent' (Michaels et al. 2001) – the aggressive competition for an apparently limited individual commodity – 'talent'.

While the Mckinsey assumptions of the talent pool have been challenged (see for example, Gladwell 2002), the interest in individual leadership has continued apace, together with a profileration of adjectives to denote specific qualities that delineate it. Stogdill's large-scale study found that there were 'as many definitions as there are people who have attempted to define it' (1974: 259).

Many of these variations on a theme originate in corporate literature and have found their way into the educational discourse, typically with a focus on the highly successful, larger than life, business leaders who have turned their companies around (e.g. Collins 2001). If not a model which transfers directly into school practice, it has tended to reinforce the focus on the headteacher, the heroic rescuer of failing schools.

> Narratives of the big leaders on the world stage, while less directly influential on educational practice, have provided a backdrop to how the qualities of individual leadership come to be focused on the headteacher or those in positions of conspicuous power (Waterhouse et al. 2008: 2)

The myriad forms of 'adjectival' leadership that have crossed corporate and educational boundaries include – visionary (Nanus 1978), passionate (Davies and Brighouse 2008), adaptive (Heifetz 1994), invitational (Purkey and Siegel 2002), servant (Greenleaf 1997), transactional and transformational (Burns 1978). However, unique to education is the variant on a theme which has had the greatest impact and surfaces repeatedly in this volume – 'instructional leadership'. It is a term that enjoys a large degree of conceptual elasticity. Its apparent focus on 'instruction' does not immediately bring to mind the learner or the learning process, which is why the terminology of leadership for learning has provided the title for this handbook. So our story starts with a focus on learning.

A Focus on Learning

In the beginning was learning. It is the first principle of leadership for learning and its compass includes what we know about where learning starts, and sometimes ends. The demonisation of child-centredness during the Reagan–Thatcher regime is a curious anomaly since learning is by definition, and has always been, child-centred. What else could it be? We are the architects of our own intelligence, writes Perkins (1995), a task we undertake all by ourselves months before conception, helped or hindered by what passes through the umbilical chord and the level of comfort or discomfort, stimulation or inhibition that the uterine environment affords. This is where nature and nurture first meet.

From the first days and weeks after birth, in this new bewildering environment, we pursue what Csikzentimahlyi (1990) terms 'flow' experiences, the psychological high that comes from the meeting point of challenge and skill. Learning by discovery is what, as human beings, we do, our innate latitude for adventure only constrained by protective parents or undermined by neglectful adults. Even after childhood is left behind we continue to seek out cognitive challenges, through Sudoku, crosswords, jigsaw puzzles, chess and bridge problems, pub quizzes and video games because the progress from cognitive dissonance to cognitive resolution is intrinsically rewarding (Egan 1997).

In the early years before education is 'delivered', discovery and new intellectual challenges are their own reward. It is only as we institutionalise and ration learning that it requires sanctions, compensations and extrinsic incentives such as gold stars and marks out of ten. The spontaneous multi-faceted learning that occurs in informal contexts contrasts with so much of what takes place in classrooms – sequential, cerebral and pre-determined. Objectives, targets and levels of attainment tell us that the teacher is unlikely to be surprised into deviation or ambushed by children's spontaneous 'off-task' insights.

The question this disjuncture poses is 'to what extent are schools capable of taking forward and enriching that informal learning, or, in some cases,

attempting to repair the ruins of an intellectually and emotionally impoverished childhood?

At what point and in what way do children begin to engage with school? And at what point do they begin to disengage? Schlechty (2002) posited a fivefold range of responses to school from engagement, through strategic compliance and ritual compliance, to retreatism and rebellion. These responses are not simply to be laid at the door of the individual pupil, however. 'It is not just an individual or personal experience', writes Patrick Lewis (2007) 'rather it enmeshed with family, community, the greater society' (p. 49) and inescapably with the twin deities of curriculum and assessment.

Curriculum can all too easily become that sequenced 'ruthlessly cumulative' (Pinker 2003) series of tasks to be overtaken, while its handmaiden assessment is seen as recalling and reproducing what you have been taught, not a reflection of what you have been enthralled by, what you have learned about yourself, or learned about your learning. Yet, as adults, when we look back on school is it not the peak moments of enjoyment, discovery and 'flow' that we recall? Those memorable events are often experienced anew with the emotional texture that gave rise to them. And we recall those teachers who weaved their magic, made us laugh and sometimes made us cry with empathy in their story telling.

In Scotland in the 1970s before the age of performativity and accountability, many primary schools used an approach called Storyline. Although it preceded neuroscientific findings of the brain's predilection for the narrative form, it construed learning as a narrative quest for deeper meaning. Learning was story telling but the stories to be told and shared came from the pupils; the setting for the imaginative creations carefully scaffolded by their teachers. Its thematic approach owed much to progressivism, before that became a dirty word, engaging children in making connections between the external knowledge world and the inner world of their creative imagination. The classroom, indeed the whole of a school, might become an Amazon rain forest, a Victorian village, an island community or an urban street.

Jerry Starrat's view of school as place in which children and young people engage in a personal quest for their identity as learners and as human beings is a reminder of an idyll that existed once and is still recognisable in some communities and in some parts of the world.

> As human beings they [children] are searching, and must search for the truth of who they are. Educators miss this connection because they are accustomed to view the learning agenda of the school as an end in itself, rather than as a means for the moral and intellectual 'filling out' of learners as human beings. Schools assume that their learning agenda stands above and outside of the personal and civic life of learners. By and large the message communicated to learners is: leave your personal and civic lives at the schoolhouse door – certainly at the classroom door. (Starratt 2005: 3)

This touches on the second of five principles in the 'wedding cake' model. School provides (or can provide) the milieu in which children learn about themselves, about others at first hand.

Conditions for Learning

The proposition that milieu is critical and may weigh more heavily in lifelong learning than attainment outcomes is endorsed by Hartman Von Hentig's series of letters to a mythical nephew Tobias in response to the question 'Why should I have to go to school?' in one letter he writes:

> In school you meet people different from yourself from different backgrounds, children you can observe, talk to, ask questions, for example someone from Turkey or Vietnam, a devout Catholic or an out and out atheist, boys and girls, a mathematical whiz kid, a child in a wheelchair… I believe wholeheartedly that the open school is there first and foremost to bring young people together and to help them to learn to live in a way that our political society so badly needs (Von Hentig 2001: 47)

This collegial medium (and essential purpose) is cited by Andersen (2010: 15) as one the characteristics of Finnish classrooms. 'The Finnish school system pays more attention to the class, a community of pupils; pupils must function together and take account of each other'.

The significance of this should not be underestimated as research has consistently shown that the 'social mix' (Thrupp 1999) may be the most powerful of determinants of attitudes and achievement. In school effectiveness studies it has been described as the 'compositional effect' (Mortimore 1998), put simply as 'who you go to school with' (MacBeath et al. 2006). As schools increasingly become multi-cultural, the milieu in which you learn assumes greater salience, the medium is the message.

Conditions for learning cover a broad field, write Black and Wiliam (2009) bringing together personal epistemology, task and environment. Personal epistemology includes all 'cognitive functions, past experience recalled, beliefs, dispositions, motivation and knowledge of the domain, of the current task and of relevant tactics and strategies' (p. 15). Task conditions include resources available to the learner, constraints inherent in a task, time and instructional cues, in interaction with constraints in the school environment and local context.

The title of Peter Senge's book *Schools that Learn* (Senge et al. 2003) shifts the focus of our attention from the pupil as learner to the school as learner. The knowledge that is acquired and 'transmitted' is embedded in the structures and cultures of the school, growing virtually on a daily basis, so it may be said, one never steps into the same school twice. The primary task of leadership is, therefore, to breathe life, excitement and enthusiasm into the learning environment for students and for teachers (Sackney and Mitchell 2008). 'This implies, of course, that leaders are comfortable with ambiguity, that they are more interested in learning than in outcomes, and that they trust teachers and students to work their magic in the classrooms' (p. 126).

'Ambiguity', 'trust' and 'magic' defy easy measurement and struggle to find a place in the arithmetic of tightly prescribed student outcomes. In England, where the narrowed definition of outcomes has lessened ambiguity and diminished trust, it was the loss of 'magic moments' in the classroom that was one of the primary

reasons given by teachers for leaving the profession they loved (Galton and MacBeath 2008).

> It's the spontaneity that's gone. I mean if it had snowed we used to run to the window and we'd stop and do some creative poetry. That's gone now because everything is very much structured now, very planned and that's a shame.
>
> 'I felt my confidence suddenly going. I felt deskilled as if everything we had been doing all these years, in a way it was almost like the government saying, "You haven't been doing it well enough. This is how it should be done now. This is what we're prescribing. This is what we want you to deliver".
>
> My mum's a teacher and when I said I want to be one she said 'Jesus are you alright?'

In such circumstances is there a failure of leadership in supplying the oxygen for professional learning, which in turn breathes life into classroom learning? Keeping learning at the very centre of everything in the face of myriad other pressures and everyday 'busyness' requires the ability, in David Hargreaves' words to 'fly below the radar' (in Bangs et al. 2010: 149). It requires both the will and skill to pursue what is valued rather than simply what is measured.

Dialogue

Dialogue, the third of the five principles is, in the words of the New Zealand Government Office, what maintains the flow of the learning conversation. 'Dia logos' in the Greek denotes 'meaning flowing through it'. Dialogue is a very particular form of conversation involving the exchange of ideas and the search for shared meaning and common understanding. It is quite different in form and purpose from casual chat or combative debate. It is, according to Watkins, a quality of talk closely 'associated with rich learning, development of understanding and building of community knowledge' (Watkins 2004: 120). Dialogue enables us to take learning forward, to reach understandings which would not be possible in the sequestered environment of the individual classroom. It is grounded in honesty and trust which do not simply arise spontaneously but take time to nurture and embed within the school culture. Alexander (2004) who characterised pedagogy as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful, applies the same principle to professional learning.

He goes on to pose a series of questions about how professionals talk together:

- Do they listen to each other without interruption?
- Do they respect each other's viewpoint or do they pontificate, presuming that wisdom comes only with status?
- Do they accept the discipline of collective problem-solving or prefer to pursue private agendas?
- Do they stick to the topic in hand or do they digress?
- Yet do they feel able to speculate without fear that their contribution will be sidelined as 'theoretical' or 'irrelevant'?

- In respect of ideas which they have been offered do they ask probing questions, or do they merely hear them and pass them on?
- In respect of what is novel or unfamiliar are they prepared willingly to suspend disbelief?
- Do discussions take thinking forward or do they go round in circles?
- Do the participants have the skills which all this requires? (Alexander 2004: 39)

Dialogue does not occur serendipitously but is a consequence or 'outcome' of leadership for learning. Teacher talk, particularly in the sanctuary of the staff room/teacher lounge, can be, in Deal and Peterson's (1990) descriptor – 'toxic'.

Positive, learning-centred talk is engaged through the use of tools and strategies – vignettes and stories of practice, identification and reframing of dilemmas and challenges, lesson study, and by the judicious choice and use of critical friends.

Critical friends help school colleagues become aware of, value and reflect on practice that has perhaps been taken for granted. They can help to make connections between school colleagues by picking up on common points of interest and triggering conversations that could develop into sustained dialogue.

Learning, as Cousins (1996) puts it, flows from 'organisational sensemaking'. It is a collective capacity, to learn about ourselves and to live with the inconsistencies, the contradictions, the cognitive dissonances that precede and characterise learning. 'The valuing of consistency leads to competency; the valuing of inconsistency leads to learning' (Arygris and Schön 1978).

As Sue Swaffield writes in this volume (Chap. 57), the development of dialogue often benefits from the external eye, the insight and challenge that comes from a critical friend, with expertise to encourage openness and a willingness to reframe, in the quest for deeper understanding.

Shared Leadership

Leadership may, like learning, be understood not simply as the province of those in formally defined roles but as opportunistic, emergent and collective. Yet it is so often cast as the province of individuals that it can be difficult to perceive what sharing of leadership means. It is most likely to be seen as delegation, giving decision-making authority to others, perhaps even relinquishing some authority and power. Yet, it is still focused on the individual through whom leadership is granted. By contrast, opportunistic leadership occurs within cultures which encourage leadership to be taken rather than simply given, an expression of agency, an underpinning precept of the 'wedding cake' model described above.

The concept of 'leaderful practice', 'leaderful communities' (Raelin 2003) and 'leadership density' (Sergiovanni 1992) points to the same principle – that all members of a school have something to contribute. Sergiovanni, for example, argues that a successful school is one in which the maximum degree of leadership is exercised by the maximum number of people including teachers, pupils, parents and support

staff. Density is tested when many people are involved in influencing the work of others, decision making and generating new ideas (Sergiovanni 2001). These issues are explored further in David Frost's chapter which extends the discussion to teacher leadership and student leadership.

The sharing of leadership is a challenging prospect for schools in which practice is atomised, where there is little sense of a collective culture and there is lack of a capacity for change. As Elmore has argued:

> The default culture in most schools is one in which practice is atomized, school organisation reinforces the atomization by minimizing occasions for collective work on common problems, so the school lacks the basic organisational capacity to use any kind of external knowledge or skill to improve practice. (Elmore 2005: 47)

There is, nonetheless, persuasive evidence to suggest (Lieberman and Friedrich 2007; Brotto and Barzano 2009) that teachers not only improve their practice when they talk to other teachers but that the dialogic process also raises to the surface the incipient leadership qualities that have lain dormant – awakening 'the sleeping giant' (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2001). This may occur in the routine flow of school life, through collaborative lesson planning, peer observation or lesson study, or in professional development workshops in dedicated time. The enhanced professional learning and professional confidence gained through practice-focused conversations serve both to strengthen theoretical principles of learning and to promote a sharing of leadership activity.

Sharing of leadership becomes especially important as schools extend their boundaries to include myriad forms of out-of-school learning, extra-curricular activities, homework clubs and study support, field trips, inter-school and inter-country exchanges and what in Hong Kong is known as Other Learning Experiences (OLE). The mandatory 15% of curriculum time encompasses initiatives in community and social settings and exchanges with other countries. It requires and promotes agency of teachers who have to assume responsibility in contexts other than the classroom, and places students in contexts which do not allow them to simply respond to what their teachers tell them.

This links closely to the principle of 'shared accountability' which was seen to encourage moving away from a concentration on external recognition of quality to self-evaluation as a means of improvement.

Accountability

It is through activities which demand sharing and dialogue that leadership comes to be understood in new ways, within a new frame, as a collective activity, and out of which mutual accountability grows as an integral element. In their rush to modernise and bureaucratise, writes Bajunid (2009), Malaysian political leaders failed to build on the cultural legacy. New waves of legislation have failed to recognise the inherent professional capital, and the deskilling of teachers that occurs

when the professional capacity is dissipated. Bajunid argues for a 'reclamation of the intellect', a rebuilding of professional trust in which accountability is inherent and coherent.

With a strong and confident sense of what accountability means in a collegial sense, teachers are more likely to be able to address external accountability on their own terms and by reference to values commonly held. Elmore (2005) makes an important distinction between internal and external accountability. The former describes the conditions that precede and shape the responses of schools to pressure that originates in policies outside the organisation. The level or degree of its success is measured by the degree of convergence among what individuals say they are responsible for (responsibility), what people say the organisation is responsible for (expectations), and the internal norms and processes by which people literally account for their work (accountability structures). Elmore concludes that with strong internal accountability schools are likely to be more responsive and creative in facing external pressure for performance.

Internal accountability, moral and professional, implies an openness to dialogue, to the nature of evidence, a form of self-evaluation that is genuinely embedded in teachers' thinking and day-to-day practice. It is described in New Zealand (Education Review Office 2010) as 'emergent' and 'business-as-usual' self-review, a habit, not an event. Opening up of practice to colleagues whose intentions are to learn rather than to judge, removes, or at least attenuates, anxiety and pressure. It both rests on and engenders trust. When there is a measure of professional trust, it is possible for mutual support to be present, a relationship in which people experience a genuine intention on the part of the other to help without a hidden agenda, without a sense that support comes with caveats and some form of payback. When there is intelligent internal accountability and the critical support of a trusted critical friend, schools are likely to respond more positively to external pressure, confident in the knowledge that they have a rich and unique story to tell, one which rises above the mean statistics and pushes against prevailing orthodoxies of competitive attainment.

Writing in a Canadian context Ben Jaafar (2006) describes the tensions between economic bureaucratic accountability and ethical professional accountability. These can, she argues, be addressed by 'inquiry-based accountability'. In this model evaluation at classroom, school and external levels is used as an entry point for professional discussions about opportunities for enhancing learning and assuring that priorities are those that serve the best interests of children and young people.

In Hong Kong's School Development and Accountability framework senior leaders and members of the School Improvement Team have been helped to grasp the difference between contractual, professional and moral accountability (Becher and Eraut 1981). The approach to self-evaluation and external review is designed to help school leadership manage the sensitive balance between improvement and accountability purposes, rendering to their political masters that which does not compromise the accountability that is owed to staff, to parents and to students.

Successful Schools, Successful Leadership, Successful Learning

Embarking on a journey through this volume we encounter in each chapter, the 'tug of war' between complying with performance accountability criteria (efficiency measures) and pursuing broader leadership for learning criteria (effectiveness measures). As Sackney and Mitchell (2008: 126) put it:

> We have found that, in successful schools, learning leaders know the people, the organizations, the communities, and the contexts; they ask questions rather than provide answers; and they know what is happening with teaching and learning. Most importantly, they find ways to release the creative energy of teachers and students, for this is the force that fosters experimentation and that build capacity for learning-centred leadership.

But if learning is a journey, then let us take you with us, to all the continents, covering many of the cultures, religions and political ideologies available, in a search for a better understanding of how these two terms can be put together to form the most powerful human force that we know, the ability to think, to reason and to make decisions based on those, by being able to know or understand something better tomorrow than I do today. That, after all, is the simplest, and perhaps the best, definition of learning.

Overview of the Handbook

The chapters in this book seek to provide an analysis of the current state of the art of leadership for learning. The handbook is divided into parts that enable the reader to look at a series of chapters on similar themes from different systems and parts of the world.

In Chap. 1, the current chapter, we have explored the varied, and sometimes confused, interpretations of leadership for learning. As an introduction to this volume, it tries lay some of the groundwork for navigating this complex territory, drawing on international studies which bring differing understandings of 'learning', 'leadership' and their interconnections. With this as background, we then explore a variety of individual issues that focus on leadership for learning, collated into eight different collections of chapters from around the world.

Part I: Major Themes in Leadership for Learning: An International Review

The first part provides a general review of the work to come where our regional editors get the opportunity to discuss some of the key issues facing their region, but in many ways are facing us all, as we move into unchartered waters when it comes to

seeking high levels of learning for everyone that comes into contact with the education system.

In Chap. 2, Ira Bogotch reminds us that educational leaders need to know and understand the cultural history of the country in which they are working and provides a description of why this is especially important in the USA, with the impact of two major, yet sometimes opposing forces of public welfare and economic power. Over time these have ebbed and flowed into priority position and an understanding of how they interact and what this means becomes critical to understanding a way forward for schools in the future.

In Chap. 3, Larry Sackney provides an overview of some key issues in Canada such as governance and policy environments where each province goes its separate way, but within a common framework of expectations and requirements. Other significant issues in this volume include the way in which leadership development, especially as it applies to leadership for learning, is managed and the impact of increasing levels of accountability and changing demographics, in the community, also in the teaching community, has had on the focus on learning.

In Chap. 4, Beatrice Avalos argues that Latin American countries are different in terms of the curricular areas measured and that results are not only linked to per capita income but they also show an effect on schools and their conditions. The chapter outlines how the Latin American authors deal with these issues.

In Chap. 5, Lejf Moos discusses the impact of Neo-liberal Public Management on the development of school leaders in Denmark. He questions whether the current policy of training school leaders and leaders from other human service areas, in the same room and in the same way, is appropriate, and he looks at some government expectations that come from international organisations such as the OECD, together with leadership theories, that create a list that makes it almost impossible for any leader to be successful.

In Chap. 6, Jim O'Brien reviews the chapters provided by the group of authors who contributed to this handbook from the United Kingdom. The main themes are how students' learning can be enhanced, better approaches to assessment which promote student learning, greater collaboration by communities of practice, students exercising leadership, the learning of all the workforce, not just professional teachers and the preparation of school leaders or other school colleagues. There is also a concern with the what, the how and the why, in relation to leadership for learning in schools for the realisation of enhanced student outcomes.

In Chap. 7, Neil Dempster considers how the political and policy landscapes of Australia and New Zealand have impacted on school leadership and the moves in both countries to share leadership with teachers and students to establish ways in which the broader community might be included in the learning process. He discusses some of the emerging research that links leadership to student outcomes and some of the directions that research might take in the future.

In Chap. 8, Thuwayba Al-Barwani reports that there has been a number of issues raised by significant international reports on education in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region and that quality of teaching, learning and assessment, the culture of learning, a culture of quality, educational leadership and educational development and reform are areas identified as being of special importance. She

discusses how various MENA countries have attempted to address these issues and identifies a number of areas where further development is needed.

Part II: Theoretical and Contextual Frameworks for Leadership for Learning

In the second part, we start our journey into the world of leadership for learning by considering some theoretical and contextual constructs of the term. This involves first of all a consideration of the nature of research into education, and specifically leadership, and then we follow up with how interpretations of leadership for learning may differ, depending on where in the world you might be.

In Chap. 9, Daniel Muijs analyses recently published articles to explore the dominant types of research in leadership, and concludes that the predominant modes of research in the field are either case study or use survey research methods, with the majority of papers focusing on direct effects or direct effects/antecedents models. Implications of these findings and suggestions for future research are discussed.

In Chap. 10, Abdelkader Ezzaki argues that 'leadership for learning' is a multi-dimensional quality needing a multi-lateral effort and is not the monopoly of any individual or group in the education sector. He suggests that there are a number of facets or viewpoints and discusses each: (a) the public facet, (b) the policy facet, (c) the training and supervision facet, (d) the pedagogical facet, (e) the school management facet, and (f) the instructional facet, all of which need to be considered if success is to be achieved.

In Chap. 11, Neil Dempster, Greg Robson and Mike Gaffney review Australian and New Zealand research on leadership for learning, and focus on the Principals as Literacy Leaders [PALL] Pilot Project, an action research project funded by the Australian Government, as a means of raising implications for politicians, policy makers, school leaders, parents, the wider community and researchers themselves.

In Chap. 12, Ulrich Reitzug and Deborah West report on their interviews with 40 principals from 11 US states in which the principals talk about their work in this era of high stakes accountability, with a focus on their instructional leadership practice. It proposes a developmental framework of instructional leadership, categorised into direct forms, including linear, organic and prophetic instructional leadership, and indirect forms including relational, empowering and political instructional leadership.

Part III: System and Policy Issues on Leadership for Learning

In Part III, we consider some of the big picture issues, looking at school systems or political decisions being made that have an impact locally. It is here where we start to see what Townsend (1994) called the 'core curriculum' of leadership for

learning. It is where government and system expectations, about what all schools and school leaders are expected to do and achieve, come into focus.

In Chap. 13, Sue Thomas and Louise Watson examine the changing relationship between national policy and educational leadership in Australian schools, arguing there are insistent demands for higher levels of quality and accountability. They analyse the discourses on quality and examine how these discourses have impacted on an emerging national framework of professional standards for school leaders.

In Chap. 14, Qian Haiyan and Allan Walker argue that while the central government in China has moved to deemphasise the examination focus and have given clearly articulated intentions to reform learning, school principals find themselves under pressure from all directions to produce outstanding student exam results. They report on a study of principals' work lives as they attempt to address the demands the reforms impose on student learning.

In Chap. 15, Clive Dimmock and Jonathan Goh argue that the Singapore Ministry of Education (MOE) has been the main change agent in education since Singapore's independence. The reforms are generally carefully planned, coherent and well articulated to ensure principals have clear expectations of how to implement policy in their schools.

In Chap. 16, John Burger, Anna Nadirova, Jim Brandon, Bob Garneau and Chris Gonnet consider informed decision making in the province of Alberta, and the benefits and challenges that are associated with that framework. The key aspects of the framework include attaining a comprehensive approach to student assessment; monitoring and understanding students' progress while controlling for various educational, cultural and social settings and conditions; supporting deeper analysis of at-risk students' achievement and encouraging evidence-informed leadership, programming and decision making.

In Chap. 17, Wilfried Schley and Michael Schratz argue we need 'system thinkers in action' and three Austrian initiatives are presented that work together to promote leadership for learning; The Leadership Academy, The New Middle School, and Hierarchy Meets Network, where the Minister of Education has dialogue with innovative educators and removes structural barriers to enable networking and cooperative activity to occur.

In Chap. 18, José Weinstein, Gonzalo Muñoz and Dagmar Raczynski argue that Chile's principals face new demands and have to implement innovative practices even though they lack the legal powers and training to do so properly. They describe the tensions this brings and the leadership practices and opportunities for training that are available. They also offer some policy suggestions that could support this transformation.

In Chap. 19, Jim O'Brien considers the policy developments for school leadership in the UK. Significant devolution has occurred within the UK with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland gaining significant powers in relation to their political and education systems. A number of initiatives, including professional development for school leaders, are discussed.

Part IV: Educating School Leaders for Leadership for Learning

Once policy is set in place, it then becomes a matter of how this policy will be implemented. Following are a series of chapters that look at how school leadership policy is translated into activity at the system level and how leadership for learning has been built into that activity.

In Chap. 20, Kenneth Leithwood, Steven Reid, Laurie Pedwell, and Marg Connor consider a major effort by the Ontario government to improve school and district leadership, consisting of 15 aligned but distinct initiatives, mostly built on relevant research. Evidence from evaluations of these initiatives are analysed to produce eight lessons that might be useful to others for developing leadership at a systemic level.

In Chap. 21, Christine Forde argues that the question of how educational leaders should be educated is of central concern, and examines one specific area of leadership development, that of headship preparation. There seem to be three broad models of leadership development: apprenticeship models, knowledge-based programmes and experiential learning programmes and Forde uses the case of Scotland, UK – as a case study to consider recent research and development projects on headship preparation.

In Chap. 22, Richard Ackerman, Gordon Donaldson, Sarah Mackenzie and George Marnik describe the approach to leadership development employed in the University of Maine's graduate program, emerging from work over the past 15 years. The program is based on three complementary dimensions of leadership knowledge: cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal. The chapter shares some of the learning methods faculty have developed to support these dimensions.

In Chap. 23, Julius Jwan and Charles Ong'ondo discuss the education of school leaders in Kenya. They review how school leadership and learning link to leadership for learning and argue that educating school leaders is a necessary endeavour, but that, in Kenya, there is no specialised training for school leaders. They are selected based on experience in the field as teachers. They end the chapter by outlining possible options to improve leadership for learning in schools in Kenya.

In Chap. 24, Fatt Hee Tie examines the role of school leaders in promoting a learning environment, together with capacity building for school leaders in Malaysia. He argues that although principals recognise the need to promote ongoing learning, there is tremendous pressure to ensure students perform well in the examination-oriented education system. He also discusses the Ministry of Education's efforts in developing future school leaders.

In Chap. 25, Inbanathan Naicker looks at two initiatives aimed at educating school principals in South Africa. One initiative is the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) and the other is the Principals Management Development Programme (PMDP). The content of both programmes, the delivery approaches employed are considered, and an evaluation of them is provided.

In Chap. 26, Chrispen Chiome describes the context for leaders in the Zimbabwe Education system, together with four programmes that educate school leaders to

ensure quality in educational provision. He identifies the challenges in training school heads, especially as it applies to developing opportunities for leadership for learning.

Part V: Implementing Leadership for Learning: The Role of the School Leader

It is also important to see how leadership practice has changed, given the perspective of a focus on learning, right through the education system. This section looks at research into leadership practice, how school leaders go about their tasks and how the delicate interactions that occur at schools, between leaders, teachers, students and others leads to a transformed school that focuses on learning.

In Chap. 27, Phil Hallinger and Ronald Heck report on the findings drawn from a series of empirical analyses that assessed the effects of collaborative leadership on school improvement and student learning. They confirm the prevailing view that collaborative school leadership can positively affect student learning in reading and mathematics by building the school's capacity for academic improvement. They further argue that leadership for student learning is a process of mutual influence, in which school capacity both shapes and is shaped by the school's collective leadership.

In Chap. 28, Carlos McCray and Floyd Beachum argue that a commitment to educational equity and excellence cannot occur without principals acknowledging and understanding the importance of culturally relevant leadership, where the school leader (1) understands the importance of diversity and recognises different social identities; (2) utilises such knowledge in their everyday practice and (3) constantly reflects on these practices to foster continuous improvement and enhancement.

In Chap. 29, Bradley Portin and Michael Knapp describe a study that examined leaders with supervisory authority (principals, assistant principals, department heads) and their nonsupervisory counterparts (teacher leaders) who were engaged in efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They suggest several ways of thinking about and exercising learning-focused leadership by considering (1) what it means for leaders to work within a demanding environment; (2) what supervisory and nonsupervisory leaders do in these kinds of settings, and (3) what their work implies for the new learning they will need to do.

In Chap. 30, Olof Johansson, Lejf Moos, Elisabet Nihlfors, Jan Paulssen and Mika Risku consider what happens when national education policies meets implementation blockages at the school district and school level. They provide a description of the Nordic governance system, and address the power distribution between the state and the municipalities in national school governance. They argue that system characteristics are crucial in determining the context for superintendent leadership and discuss a conceptual model of the Nordic superintendent in the light of empirical data.

In Chap. 31, Stephen Jacobson and Lauri Johnson examine three elements of successful school leadership: (1) improving student performance in high-need schools; (2) building organisational capacity to sustain school success over time; and (3) developing leadership that is culturally responsive. They describe the governance and funding foundations of the US system and provide an overview of the ISSPP and its contribution to the literature on leadership for improved student performance. They provide directions for future research, especially the need for site-specific and comparative analyses.

In Chap. 32, Denise Vaillant argues that schools are 'nested learning communities' with their principals responsible for establishing a culture of learning in them. But in many Latin American schools, principals see themselves in purely administrative and management terms, and is not expected to provide educational leadership. She argues that the leadership that principals could provide to improve teaching represents an enormous potential resource that is currently being wasted.

Part VI: Changing Hearts and Minds: Building Leadership for Learning in Current School Leaders

Within schools, leaders are now being charged with being the chief learner. However, in many systems there seems to be contradictory messages being given to school leaders and to others on what the task really is. Previously we have heard of the conflict between the focus on leadership for learning and the accountability regimes at large in many systems. This conflict not only plays on the mind of school leaders, but others within the school as well. This can lead, as we can see in the next chapter, to a position where becoming a school leader might not be as attractive as it once was. How then, can we make school leadership a task that people aspire to in a time of contradictions and how can we spread the understanding of the need to focus on learning (process) when we still are judged by student achievement (outcomes)?

In Chap. 33, Dean Fink argues that leadership succession in schools is seen to be a problem of misalignment with not enough people to fill the jobs on offer, but the succession challenge has more to do with politics than with supply and demand. Fink suggests that if educational policy makers aspire to recruit the most able leaders of learning, they must create 'reservoirs' of leadership potential.

In Chap. 34, Laurie Pedwell, Ben Levin, Barry Pervin, Mary Jean Gallagher, Marg Connor and Helen Beck describe the Ontario Leadership Strategy (OLS), a systematic leadership development strategy, operating in Ontario, Canada. They outline the strategy, its development, and barriers and constraints to it at a system level. They argue the leadership strategy is a supporting condition for the achievement of Ontario's overall focus on improvement.

In Chap. 35, Jorunn Møller and Eli Ottesen analyse how leadership development and preparation is conceptualised and contextualised for newly appointed school principals in Norway. They compare two different preparatory programmes that

have been granted status as a national leadership programme. They identify some significant differences with regard to perspective and emphasis in the programmes.

In Chap. 36, Stephan Huber argues that school leaders need to have a profound knowledge of learning and that professional development, both of a formal and an informal kind, plays an important part in the professionalisation of school leaders and teachers. A framework for empirical research and the evaluation of professional development programmes is introduced, to provide a theoretical framework for conducting research on, undertaking evaluation of, and for considering practice at the school level.

In Chap. 37, Cathy Wylie outlines the shift from a focus on the principal to a focus on the principal's pivotal role in leadership of the ways teachers work together in New Zealand. She describes the development of a leadership framework which has led to a new tool for schools to use in reviewing their leadership, as well as informing policymakers about the overall leadership capabilities in New Zealand schools.

In Chap. 38, Simon Clarke and Helen Wildy examine aspects of the policy environment that offers hope for advancing leadership for learning in Australia. They describe some promising recent initiatives which acknowledge the need for principals to be powerful leaders of learning as well as powerful learners themselves and identify some conditions that give developing school leaders' agency to assert a leadership for learning agenda in schools.

In Chap. 39, Inés Aguerrondo and Lea Vezub describe the expansion of basic education in Latin American countries, which has brought new challenges to education systems. They discuss two key processes being used to transform schools and to ensure a quality education: inspection systems for schools and strategies for teacher support through school-centred professional development.

Part VII: Spreading the Task: Including Others in Leadership for Learning

It is argued in many places that the task of leading and managing a school is now too big for one person and that leadership needs to be distributed widely if the school is to be successful. If we look at how this might happen, we start to consider how teachers might be involved, how students might be involved and perhaps even how parents and the community might be involved in the task of school leadership.

In Chap. 40, Susan Lovett and Dorothy Andrews highlight the connection between teacher leadership, and improved pedagogy and learning. Australian and New Zealand case studies reveal a variety of ways in which teachers can create opportunities to improve their teaching. They emphasise the need to foster communities of teacher leaders who can inspire those around them to make a difference in the lives of their students.

In Chap. 41, Sally J. Zepeda argues teacher learning should be at the core of school leaders' work. Principals have to coherently link supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation and other practices (e.g., peer coaching, mentorship, portfolio development, and action research) to meet the needs of these adult learners.

In Chap. 42, Ellie Drago-Severson introduces a new model of Learning-oriented Leadership to help school and district leaders cultivate teacher, principal, and superintendents' internal capacities to meet the challenges faced in the workplace. She shows how school leaders can create the conditions and employ practices that foster growth and learning for individuals in their schools.

In Chap. 43, Margery McMahon explores the evolution of teacher leadership in the UK, considering how new models of accomplished teaching in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland represent new forms. She argues that employment barriers in the UK mean that these models of teacher leadership are not fully accommodated and looks at the ways in which in accomplished teaching challenges existing understandings of teacher leadership.

In Chap. 44, Sara Bubb and Peter Earley explore staff development and its impact on students. They argue that development time is under-used by schools even though it impacts positively on student outcomes. The authors use Guskey's (2002) model of professional development to consider different levels of impact, including the learning and experiences of students.

In Chap. 45, Liliana Montenegro describes the work of the Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT), a regional effort in three regions of Latin America. She provides data on educational progress in Central America, a description of the model of professional development and the materials used by CETT, and describes how the model impacted on a population of 125,000 children in the Dominican Republic.

In Chap. 46, James Skinner, Alf Lizzio and Neil Dempster consider the meanings attached to leadership by adolescents, drawing on Australian research. They argue that defining leadership from an adolescent perspective will help re-conceptualise approaches to the youth leadership experience and learning for civic engagement. They argue for a view of leadership that can enhance learning and foster higher levels of civic engagement within the school and the wider community.

In Chap. 47, Thuwayba Al-Barwani and Mohamed Osman analyse innovative projects and policy developments that promote student learning in the Sultanate of Oman. They introduce a theoretical framework (the 'Innovation Sustainability Wheel') that can be used as a tool to determine issues that may impact on the sustainability of innovations.

In Chap. 48, David Frost considers the links between school leadership, teacher leadership and student leadership. He discusses two research projects: the 'Influence and Participation of Young People in their Learning' (IPiL) project and the 'Evaluation of the Learning to Lead Initiative' (ELLI) to consider strategies that schools can use to enable students to exercise leadership.

Part VIII: From People Learning to Organisational Learning: Building Capacity

Part of the task of the school leader is to build organisational capacity as well as people capacity. Going beyond the individual needs of the groups of people that he or she works with, the school leader now needs to understand organisational learning, developing professional learning communities and what that means for leadership. This selection of chapters considers the types of activities that leaders can be involved in to help people to work together as a unit for the betterment of the organisation and some of the things that might prevent this.

In Chap. 49, Fenwick English describes the curriculum management audit in the USA as the epitome of organisational rationality and control, where the means of internal control needed to improve pupil scores on standardised tests tightly circumscribes teacher autonomy and is a source of teacher resistance to those tests. He argues that a different set of questions are needed, but that these bring into focus the power of the political elites who now exercise control of schooling and are thus not likely to be viewed favourably by teachers.

In Chap. 59, Mark Hadfield and Christopher Chapman argue that school-to-school networks have become integral features of many education systems, that many school-to-school networks share common features and that their leadership faces similar challenges. They propose and discuss a framework for network leadership.

In Chap. 51, Peter Henrik Raae argues that transnational trends have not only led to completing, but also conflicting, considerations about school and the school's task, and describes how principals attempt to cope with this new ambiguity by setting up different ideas and models for school organisation.

In Chap. 52, Alan Bain identifies a set of principles for school reform that can be used by school leaders to guide school improvement and change processes. The principles are derived from theories of self-organisation and complexity and show the way in which theory can provide a practical design for enacting change in schools.

In Chap. 53, Coral Mitchell and Larry Sackney present concepts and strategies that equip leaders to conceptualise learning systems from an ecological perspective, to examine the mutual influences and interconnections among various aspects of school life, and to frame and reframe conditions for enhancing teaching and learning. These are organised around four domains: cognitive, affective, cultural and structural, requiring leaders to pay attention to the processes and patterns of living systems.

In Chap. 54, Qing Gu shows how a Chinese school principal progressively and continuously creates conditions for learning and development of her staff and through this, builds and enhances capacity at the individual, collective and community levels. We are shown that passion, aspirations, leadership qualities and strategies are needed for successful leaders both nationally and internationally.

In Chap. 55, Atta Taha Zidan explores 'learning' and 'teaching', how they relate to one another and to quality in education. He argues there is a preoccupation with 'teaching' at the expense of 'learning' and argues that a school learning culture is the key to total education quality and spells out the fundamental conditions for securing a climate and culture for learning in the school.

In Chap. 56, Grzegorz Mazurkiewicz argues that the starting point for leadership has to be a deep understanding of human learning, motivation and evolving needs. He argues for radical change in the relationship between the various actors who create the conditions for learning and teaching and suggests that schools can no longer meet the needs of young people without leadership that is alert to the profound impact of social change and is proactive in changing mindsets and the practices which follow.

In Chap. 57, Sue Swaffield considers issues of how to lead assessment for learning, and briefly sets out the underlying concepts of learning and assessment. The leadership roles and the actions of students, teachers, schools and local authority leaders are considered, before establishing the five principles of a 'Leadership for Learning' framework.

Part IX: Responding to Diversity: Different Ways of Moving Towards Leadership for Learning

A great deal of work has been done in the past two decades to look at issues of context and issues of diversity. School leaders now realise that the group of people that he or she works with do not necessarily have a common background or a common set of goals. Their view of the world is shaped by their background, whether that is intellectual, cultural, national, gendered, learning styles, economic or political. A consideration of the set of possibilities that arises depending on who you are working with, and what those people's background might be, is an important way of looking at leadership. If we are to succeed at leadership for learning, we must recognise the diversity of those we are working with. This set of chapters explores some of these issues.

In Chap. 58, Russell Bishop considers how education leaders can act to reduce educational disparities for indigenous and other minorities. He uses examples from a large-scale education reform project in New Zealand to develop a model for what 'responsive structural reform' looks like in practice and what leaders need to do to implement and sustain gains made in student performance at the classroom, school and system-wide levels.

In Chap. 59, Allan Walker and Frank Xue-Ju Wang consider how social context impacts leadership for learning across three Chinese societies (Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan). They outline and compare the political, economic, institutional and cultural contexts as well as school leadership. They suggest that social context impacts leadership for learning in important ways and argue the need for increased micro-political analysis of leadership for learning.

In Chap. 60, Ekhleif Tarawneh considers how quality assurance in higher education institutions is assessed in the Arab Region and examines understandings of 'quality' and 'assessment'. He discusses the experiences of Arab states which have established quality assurance commissions and identifies existing gaps in the current practice of Quality Assurance.

In Chap. 61, James Ryan explores ways in which leaders respond to selected policy issues in diverse communities, by considering two cases, the first involving religion/culture and the second an issue of discipline. Implications for leadership for learning are identified and discussed.

In Chap. 62, Chrispen Chiome and Mupa Paul consider the kind of leadership that is needed during the transitional period being faced currently in Zimbabwe. They consider innovative, successful initiatives and practices that the government might adopt in schools and policy options that might achieve heightened expectations of schools and their leaders in a changing environment.

In Chap. 63, Francesca Brotto takes an intercultural perspective from the Bridges across Boundaries international project. She considers issues related to context and cultural diversity, providing examples from European and non-European collaborative initiatives to argue that an international project wishing to impact on learning and leadership issues in schools needs to enact essential elements of both learning and leadership within the partnership itself.

In Chap. 64, Vitallis Chikoko and Amelia Tantso Rampai report on a study conducted in two Lesotho schools that consider the cultures of schools with high academic performance in a country where most schools seem to perform poorly. Findings show that leaders for learning must create conditions that enable everyone in the school, including themselves, to be continually learning and that social cohesion, where teachers identify themselves and their work as a collective, the 'we' factor, needs to be nurtured in every school.

In Chap. 65, Greer Johnson and Paula Jervis-Tracey challenge conventional notions of community and parental involvement in schooling and argue for a proposal that invites parents to lead and engage in their children's learning through a two-way conduit of respectful practice between communities, homes and schools.

Part X: Afterword

In Chap. 66, John MacBeath and Tony Townsend consider what we have learned from the material contained in the 65 chapters and what this means for our understanding of leadership for learning.

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Part I
Major Themes in Leadership for Learning:
An International Perspective

Chapter 2
US Cultural History: Visible and Invisible Influences on Leadership for Learning

Ira Bogotch

Introduction

In his conclusion to *Leadership for Learning* (MacBeath and Cheng 2008), John MacBeath synthesized the contemporary international challenges facing leadership for learning as follows: discovering and sustaining an educator's sense of agency, understanding how changes in contexts always matter, and working in and around competitive international rankings of schools and nations. These three educational challenges have differential effects among nations because of differences in cultural histories. The focus of this chapter will be on US cultural history – from the founding of the United States up to the present.[1]

Why Cultural History[2]?

From the beginning, two historical themes, political governance (e.g., public welfare) and economic power (e.g., property rights), have dominated educational discourses. Both have continuously influenced and reframed leadership for learning.

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[1] This timeframe, a span of over 200 years, is obviously too ambitious for a single chapter – as a documented history. But the purpose of this chapter is not to provide an historical analysis of school leadership, but rather the purpose is to demonstrate the significance for the field of school leadership to embrace both history and culture. Specifically, I will explain how school leadership practices and K-12 policies have been and will continue to be influenced by a nation's history and culture.

[2] I have chosen not to enter into the many debates regarding the term "cultural history." The academic landscape is confusing enough. What I would say is that my choices of political governance and economic power as two aspects of US cultural history is not meant to cover every cultural, social, economic, political, philosophical, and educational dimension of US history.

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Every nation has a unique cultural history. In the United States, the two dynamics of cultural history, political governance and economic power, have vied for influence and control over public education, even as they function hand in hand to promote both democracy and capitalism. There is, in Amartya Sen's (1999) view of development, a *complementarity* between politics and economics. As such, both James Madison's constitutional "checks and balances" and Adam Smith's economic "invisible hand," as metaphors and policies continuously shape national and local community debates around the concepts of "democracy," "public service," "free-markets," and "free-enterprise."

If this thesis is correct, then knowledge of US cultural history should be important to educational leaders, most notably to provide school administrators with a cultural perspective for interpreting current practices and policies. Too often in education, policies and events happening in the present become the taken-for-granted, ahistorical and acontextual "model" of a school, a district, or a nation's educational reform. That is, we tend to see current reform(s) only within the narrow context of the present.

Historical accidents and lived experiences can influence an entire generation of educators. That is, we all are affected by the era in which we are born. Today, for example, a majority of adult US citizens have never experienced what school children are experiencing in public schools: the narrowing of curriculum based on the subject areas that are tested annually; a testing regime based on prescriptive teaching methods, including scripted lesson plans. Receding into history are the past national debates centered on public responsibilities, democratic systems building, and shared decision-making. Such debates dominated the US cultural landscape for over two centuries. In contrast, students and teachers who only know schooling from the 1980s forward have been subjected to competitive international rankings, economic and business models of schooling, a national ambition of amassing individual wealth, and meeting the fearful demands for national security from a Cold War to a post-9/11 world. The point is that today's public discourses around K-12 education are very different from the ones held by previous US generations – in part by accident and in part by ignorance of educational histories (Blount 2008).

One contemporary observer of US education, Henry Giroux (2009), writes

> The pressures young people are facing in society that simultaneously attacks their sense of security and self-esteem are evident in the record levels of emotional problems young people are experiencing, ranging from depression and esteem issues to high levels of anxiety and social dysfunction. All of these are compounded by the subjection of millions of children to abusive forms of medicalization and hospitalization. (p. 60)

In today's era of accountability and standardized testing at different K-12 grade levels, it is not just students who are experiencing stress; however, their teachers and administrators have become more fearful and stressed, leading to lower indicators of teacher morale (e.g., Rado 2010) and motivating leadership researchers to call for stronger linkages between trusting relationships and school improvement (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy 1998).

At the sociocultural level, however, political governance and economic power promise individual fulfillment as well as social welfare. Both sets of values are deeply ingrained in Americans. It is only when one side of the cultural debate materially dominates – even shuts out – the other that the United States as a nation and its educational system suffer unnecessarily. But that is reality: an educator's lived experiences rarely represent the whole cultural picture of America's values. Citizens always live with such historical accidents as generations are born into war or economic depressions or with psychological and health issues.

Thus, it becomes critically important that our educational leaders bring historical and cultural perspectives to whatever contemporary school reforms are being proposed and implemented. Regardless of a particular era, school leaders should be aware of their nations' cultural history, and, in turn, should teach their publics about cultural history. How well or poorly educational leaders fulfill this public service will determine that generation's focus and direction when it comes to school reforms; how the relationship between democratic practices and economic well-being are made known to the public underlies the ongoing leadership for learning challenges.

Throughout US history, educational leaders have had to adapt policies, curricula, and pedagogies to their lived realities, however influenced politically and economically (Callahan 1962; Cremins 1965; Bogotch 2004/2011; Giroux 2009; Tyack and Cuban 1995). While this may seem obvious to all students of history, the scholarly literatures associated with the field of educational leadership, including leadership for learning – at least in the United States – seem to ignore this dynamic, and instead focus on current events (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act and competitive international rankings) to the extreme.

> It is not a sign of good health for any academic field or discipline to have an uncontested and unexamined history, especially when that field is education. Discussion and debate, as well as actions, invigorate the policies and practices of school leadership. Practically every contemporary problem has had a long and rich history of discussion and debate. Yet, many of us today will not even consider consulting the hard-earned experience of our predecessors when faced with a problem, whether it be adopting a new reading curriculum or deciding on the role of classroom testing or the scheduling of classes. Our own history seems to have no place at the school leadership and policy tables (Bogotch 2004, p. 8).

US Context: Political Governance as a Conceptual Framework

In historical analyses, a chronology can help to characterize political and economic changes. Therefore, I begin with the discussions on political governance and the national debate over the benefits of local control versus the benefits of executive authorities as thoughtfully debated in the *Federalist Papers* (1787–1788) by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay. From this starting point, I move to the

founding of the common school movement under the leadership of Horace Mann which transformed education from local community practices to open systems thinking about teaching and schooling. John Dewey's works extended this line of inquiry in terms of schools and local community experiences which would progressively reconstruct knowledge and democracy to societies as a whole. As such, we begin to see the many "back and forths," "ebbs and flows" as endemic to the American educational reform landscape. This historical narrative is dominated by US politics and governance systems.

But politics alone has never told the whole story of US educational history. Americans have lived through a revolution, slavery, industrialization, two World Wars, the Great Depression, the emergence of settlement schools and the community-school movement, the New American School Movement, charter school reforms and voucher systems, and, currently, the No Child Left Behind Act as well as Gates' Foundation of High School Reforms. The dynamics of school leadership for learning have had to adapt to these national events. But as America advanced through what historians Beard and Beard (1939) called "midpassage," from the postindustrial era of the 1900s to the 1940s, we have seen how economic influences (as well as wealthy individuals) played an increasingly dominant role in determining educational policies – challenging the precepts of our political governance. As US presidents such as Calvin Coolidge observed, Adam Smith's "invisible hand" of economic power and market forces would bring "an 'era of prosperity more extensive and of peace more permanent' than ever before in its history" (Beard and Beard 1939, p. 10). History, of course, records that both a Great Depression and a Second World War quickly erased this cause and effect prediction – and so begins our first and last lesson in US history as a discontinuous journey, not as a predictable or even progressive outcome.

According to the noted American historian Joseph Ellis (2007), "ideological and even temperamental diversity" have contributed to the success of the US experiment. That is, "[p]olitical and personal diversity enhanced creativity by generating a dynamic chemistry that surfaced routinely in the form of competing convictions whenever a major crisis materialized" (p. 17). Consequently, leadership for learning has changed many times moving back and forth from traditional to progressive ideas, from local control to centralized authorities, from system builders to compliance officers, and from institutionalized routines to creative and romantic innovations. For some observers, these changes reflect an emerging pattern, for example, from local control to centralization (Lieberman 1960/1962), from political governance to economic power, or, conversely, from centralization to a "new" localism (Crowson and Goldring 2009). The thesis here suggests that there are no fixed or definitive patterns that are *historically* valid. Rather, US cultural history is a matter of the back and forths of political power mitigating any centralizing tendencies of economic power – but not always and not for long. The American thesis now applied to educational leadership for learning is to quote Ellis (2007) "an argument without end" (p. 91). However, dissatisfying this conclusion may be to common sense or to practically minded teachers and administrators, it is quintessentially the one answer that makes historical sense for American educators.

Federalist Papers

That the United States did not get it (i.e., political governance) right the first time misses the point of American history as an ongoing national experiment. The most egregious mistakes from which the United States as a nation is still suffering consequences were slavery of African-Americans and the genocidal policies regarding Native American tribes. For Americans, leadership and learning remains a struggle particularly with these two historical legacies. For political scientists, however, American history turns on the dynamic relationships between local control and centralized authorities. The initial mistake recorded by the Founding Fathers was a political governance structure based on the decentralized Articles of Confederation, giving each of the original 13 colonies sovereignty. Ellis (2007), in paraphrasing James Madison, wrote that decentralization led to "a discernible pattern of gross irresponsibility, a cacophony of shrill voices, a veritable kaleidoscope of local interests with no collective cohesion whatsoever" (105).

Madison, Hamilton, and Jay sought to undo this political mistake by trying first to persuade the American public of the necessity of another constitutional convention. In newspaper essay after essay, 85 in total, these three authors described how a different governance structure, one rooted in national unity would not only foster states' rights, but would also honor and defend the nation in times of crisis. Using the newspaper as a popular medium of communication, the Federalist authors had to overcome the distrust of any central authority which for Americans was associated then with tyranny and despotism. The solution was a shared sovereignty with enumerated powers listed and implied for the national government and all un-named powers, residual powers, including the power of education, reserved for the states (The Federalist, No. 45). It was a complicated arrangement that would have to be debated generation by generation – hopefully by a well-educated citizenry. To the authors, this generational debate was a virtue of necessity for freedom and liberty.

> Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure. There are but two methods of providing against this evil: The one by creating a will in the community independent of the majority, that is, of the society itself; the other by comprehending in the society so many separate description of citizens, as will render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole, very improbable, if not impractical. (Federalist Paper No. 51 pp. 317–318)

Thus, the Federalist authors argued that out of a multiplicity of interests, parties, and groups – in a geographically large republic – a general good would emerge. That was and still is the political and social theory underlying the dynamic relationship between individuals, institutions, and state and national governments. It relies on maintaining open-systems thinking based on "experience," "time," and "feelings" to guide the nation through its "trials and experiments" (No. 85, p. 538). Experiences, times, and feelings change, requiring continuous assessments of our decisions and actions. Clearly, not every generation of Americans has been as successful as others in meeting the dynamic challenges of its day – especially when the present context is labeled "a crisis" by powerful elites – as opposed to there being

a substantive crisis, such as a Depression or World War. Yet, the challenges persist from generation to generation: that is, to maintain the ideals of pluralism and democracy regardless of the socioeconomic and political conditions of the day. Throughout this chapter we can see how the dynamics of leadership and learning have been redefined to fit a generation. As such, the "cautious revolution" that led to the founding of the United States as a nation has also been the underlying principle guiding the ongoing reforms and experiments for our schools and education systems throughout US history.

Educational Systems Thinking

Throughout history, there have been two prevalent default positions in understanding influences on educational reforms: (1) a focus on the role of GREAT MEN/WOMEN as opposed to incorporating social and cultural dynamics into an understanding of the dynamics of public schooling; and (2) the lip-service given to local communities of difference while holding fast to traditional structures, routines, and habits of schooling – based on experiences from previous generations. These default positions have become facile explanations substituting for authentic public engagement in discussions on the purposes, virtues, and necessities of public education [including the necessity for taxation to support public schools].[3]

True, we cannot discount the influences of great men and women throughout history who have sacrificed personal gain in order to advocate and build imaginative education systems within schools, districts, and the nation. Likewise, there are many tried and true habits which have demonstrated their worth as "good theory" with respect to teaching and learning. In short, contributions to school improvement have come from many different and contradictory directions.

Ironically, it was the life works of two great men, Horace Mann in the 1830s and 1840s and John Dewey at the turn of the twentieth century who sought to reconstruct schools through social and political activities. Through both men, we can see the themes of progressive education challenging tradition. And yet, neither Mann nor Dewey enjoyed the kind of professional successes they and their supporters had hoped for. Neither man could dismantle the dominant forces of school tradition – although neither man ever surrendered. For Mann, his primary opponents were the authoritarian school disciplinarians, a segment of the population who promoted religious orthodoxy within public schools, and the American taxpayers who did not see the common purposes for paying taxes for public schools.

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[3] Writing in 1776, before the system of public education had been established in the United States, the Scottish economist Adam Smith wrote: "The expense of the institutions for education and religious instruction, is likewise, no doubt, beneficial to the whole society, and may, therefore, without injustice, be defrayed by the general contributions of the whole society" (p. 488).

For Dewey, the traditionalists were those who refused to see that every child brought her/his human capital to school and that curricula, pedagogies, and leadership thrived only by continuously reconstructing the teaching and learning processes. Both Mann and Dewey were child-centered out of their love and respect for children, progressive ideas then and now. Both men believed deeply in democratic practices and made these practices the cornerstones of their conceptual framework and their struggles for school reforms. Culturally, these two educators were the offspring of the authors of the *Federalist Papers*. Not only was the US government an ongoing national experiment, so too were the nation's schools and our educational thinking. In Table 2.1, the parallels between Mann and Dewey are depicted demonstrating how the dynamics of teaching, leading, and learning are co-constructed and culturally relevant.

The political framework from the *Federalist Papers* forward has given US educators a legacy embedded in democratic practices, a system of common schools for all children, and local community control. At different times in our history, such *theories* of schooling were the lived realities of school leaders. By equating education with moral purposes and distinguishing between educative and noneducative experiences, Mann and Dewey sought to connect schools more closely to society.

Table 2.1   Horace Mann and John Dewey: parallels

Horace Mann (Bogotch 2006)	John Dewey (Bogotch and Taylor 1993; English 2006)
A common knowledge is the sine qua non of a civilized society	Every person, including children, brings human capital and experiences from their past lives into the present
The system of public education, specifically common schools attached to normal teacher training schools, could ensure social and economic progress as well as sustain democracy	A system of education is based on continuous improvement, challenging aristocratic ideas with democracy, moral purposes, diverse educative experiences, tentative hypothesizing, and ongoing experimentation. Laboratory learning is the site for testing teaching and learning hypotheses. School was not a preparation for life, but life itself
Education and democracy were correlatives	Education and democracy were correlatives
A system builder, political leader, and activist on behalf of public education and social justice	A philosopher, laboratory school innovator, and the political activist on behalf of public education and local communities
In teaching children, learning and pleasure are inseparable; the practices of corporal punishment and one-dimensional pedagogies (which turned teaching into telling and school subjects in mere words) were to be overcome	In teaching children, the teacher should not impose a standardized curriculum, but should connect subject matter to communities. Teaching was a process of continuing (progressive and scientific) reconstruction of experiences. Discipline emerges from community standards and the idea of teaching addresses the whole child

Their legacies are today seen in reflective practices, child-centered schools, and humanistic pedagogies even as national policies and practices substitute more authoritarian and centralized values and practices. This legacy was most evident historically during the turn of the twentieth century up through the Great Depression with supporters of settlement schools and community schools, during the 1960s with advocates for free schools and creative teaching (Miel 1961), and inside the various models of shared decision-making in the 1980s and 1990s (Bauer and Bogotch 2006).

But history also documents the rise in economic influences (e.g., Fortune 500 corporations, elite universities, and wealthy individuals) – at times aligned with US presidents and governors, most recently associated with Goals 2000, the New American Schools Development Corporation (private, nonprofit from 1991 to 1995), charter and voucher school reforms, neoliberal think tanks (e.g., The Heritage Foundation, The Manhattan Institute), and school reform philanthropists such as Bill and Melinda Gates.

The Shift from Political Governance to Economic Powers: America in "MidPassage"

The shift from political governance to economic power did not evolve in the United States all at once. In fact, the first examples of economic influences reflected more of a democratic disposition rather than the overt pursuit of money and wealth. Benjamin Rush, one of the Founding Fathers in the United States, wrote,

> I wish likewise to see the numerous facts that relate to the origin and present state of commerce, together with the principles of money, reduced to such a system as to be intelligible and agreeable to a young man. If we consider the commerce of our metropolis only as the avenue to wealth of the state, the study of it merits a place in a young man's education; but I consider commerce in a much higher light which I recommend the study of it in republican seminaries. I view it as the best security against the influence of hereditary monopolies of land, and therefore, the surest protection against aristocracy. (1798/1947/1962, p. 96)

The ability to become economically secure, therefore, was originally viewed as a humanizing process for a nation of immigrants to combat social privilege and hereditary wealth – and to participate in the economic freedoms provided by a capitalistic system. At the turn of the twentieth century, particularly in large cities such as New York, wave after wave of immigrants came to America. Immigration created severe economic hardships to which settlement workers and public educators responded, not solely from an economic perspective, but also to instill a disposition of democratic citizenship in these new arrivals. In other words, at the turn of the twentieth century, economic problems were still cast as political governance and civics issues. "From the first settlement workers viewed their efforts as experimental rather than permanent … they hoped to build their idea permanently into the structure of public education" (Berger 1956/1980, p. 2). The idea of the settlement was to engage immigrants living in city slums with public education and

address the "evils of industrialism" (p. 2). "The social settlement, concerned with the problems of industrialism, fought to make the school a center of community life for child and adult" (p.3). At its zenith, the following features became an integral part of public schools: "playgrounds and school gardens, shower baths and swimming tanks, manual training and domestic science, branches of the public library, vocation and evening schools, schools for deaf and blind children, auditoriums for use by pupils with free lecture courses and concerts, and in general the opening of schools after hours as neighborhood centers" (p. 90). Thus, while addressing economic problems of inner cities residents, children and adults, the focus of settlements remained on democratic citizenship. Settlements did not merely add activities to public schools, they radically reorganized them (p. 94). "The settlement, then, was a social movement to implement democracy by uplifting the neighborhood through education" (p. 105).

By mid-twentieth century, however, the ideal of a school as an institution common to all people of an urban community all but disappeared as an institutional reality. What remains of this experiment are the legacies of adult education, after school programs, and community centers – as well as the knowledge and understanding that for half a century, leadership for learning in the United States was very different from what today's school leaders refer to as standards and accountability.

The next example from US cultural history makes the connection among leadership for learning, community schools, and democratic politics even more explicit. Away from the settlements and ghettos of the urban cities, in rural West Virginia, the US Congress passed the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, to assist populations devastated by the Great Depression. A new community was planned, 165 homesteads, for displaced coal mining families in West Virginia. At the center of this new community, Arthurdale, was to be the federal government's first subsidized project of the New Deal, a community school.

> It is proposed that, just as the organization of this community represents an experiment seeking to discover means of needed adjustment in our social and economic life, likewise let this be a new school, providing for its citizens of all ages richer and more adequate educational opportunities. (Stack 2004, p. 188)

In this mission statement, we see the roots of Jeffersonian democracy and democratic communities. We also see the depth of understanding reflected in the ideas of President Franklin Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor Roosevelt. Here was an economic community development project envisioned along the lines of US political history as "two simple truths about the liberty of a democratic people, … The first truth is that the liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself… [the second truth was that the real menace to the country came from] men who are not selfish and who are good citizens, but who cannot see the social and economic consequences of their actions in a modern economically interdependent community" (cited in Seldes 1947, pp. 5–6). Even under capitalism, there can be abuses in undue competition and self-interest – tenets identified explicitly by Adam Smith (1776/1991).

The Arthurdale school's leader, Ms. Elsie Clapp had a successful career in leadership practice and academics. She had been a noted principal in New York and in Louisville, Kentucky and a student of John Dewey. Through mutual friends, Ms. Clapp met with Eleanor Roosevelt who immediately offered her the principalship of Arthurdale Community School. As with her previous moves, Ms. Clapp's one stipulation was that she could bring with her experienced staff, for this educational experiment, a total of eight teachers with over 5 years of rural educational experiences.

Elsie and her staff had experience in using local resources as the basis for curriculum development. "The teachers studied farming, homesteading, village games [because] understanding cultural heritage was a central component of self-realization" (p. 196). Ms. Clapp planned for day and night classes for everyone in Arthurdale – from ages 2 to 72. Teachers were active members of the community, not just as teachers but as firefighters, musicians, and like the settlement schools, there were greenhouses, recreation buildings, libraries, cafeteria and kitchens, home economics, a doctor's office, a bank, and bookstore (p. 200). Each grade had its own theme and curriculum connecting academic subjects with community life. To political opponents, the school, like the New Deal itself, was labeled socialism and seen as a plot to overthrow the legitimate government of the United States. But that was not the undoing of Arthurdale. Just as the settlement communities could not compete with the diversity of life in the big cities, neither could Arthurdale guarantee permanent employment. Moreover whether the experiment was centered in an urban or rural setting, the United States could not overcome classism and racism of Jim Crow laws. In West Virginia, African Americans were denied land for homesteads. In New York City, ethnic identities clashed with Americanization policies in education. Thus, the very same political and economic forces that had helped create the concept of community schools also led to the abrupt end of these political/economic experiments. In Stack's retelling of the history of Elsie Clapp, he concluded that "true progressivism had its limitations…. It was designed to work within the capitalist system rather than to change it" (p. 208). The purpose of retelling this history here is to reinforce the complementarity thesis of Sen (1999) regarding politics and economics: "…economic unfreedom can breed social unfreedom, just as social or political unfreedom can also foster economic unfreedom" (p. 8).

The Rise of US Economic Power and the Vestiges of Political Discourses

The "invisible hand" metaphor applied to Adam Smith (1776/1991) described how free-markets, competition, and self-interests serve as the checks and balances in a self-regulatory economic system. They now become the lever of educational policies and practices in the twentieth century. Previously, public education had followed the Jeffersonian ideal of "an explosion happening in slow motion" (Ellis 2007, p. 20). Ellis' thesis is that the American Revolution was a

cautious or evolutionary revolution – accommodating the contradictory leadership agendas of victory on the battlefield and victory in governance after the battle. The US Constitution formally institutionalized such contradictions in terms of checks and balances, that is, checks against tyranny as well as checks against disunity and separation. In other words, from a governance perspective, there has never been a one best system for government or for schools – at least not as an American tradition. For Americans, the American Dream has not only been defined by freedom, liberty, and a bill of rights, but also by the right to pursue happiness as the accumulation of wealth: political governance and economic power.

After World War II, the pace of American life increased as mechanization brought changes into factories and the home. A consumer-oriented society in which not only accumulation of money, property, and wealth were important, but so, too, was the pace of exchange. Products had to be replaced with newer, more improved models. Consumption became deliberately conspicuous. While such life-style changes did not directly challenge democratic practices, the ascendency of economics affected government policymakers as they looked more and more to corporate America for fast-paced innovative ideas (as products). As market thinking clashed with political governance, Zygmunt Bauman (2007) wrote: "The result… is a gradual separation between the power to act, which now drifts towards markets, and politics, which, though remaining the domain of the state, is progressively stripped of its freedom of manoeuvre and authority to set the rules and be arbiter of the game" (cited in Giroux 2009, p. 29). The shift towards economic power influenced the school reform movement as it began the search for a "model" of school reform worthy of "scaled up" status. US politicians (US President George H. W. Bush, 1989–1993) and corporate executives (Gerstner of IBM, Kearns of Xerox, Gates of Microsoft) voiced their frustrations at the slow pace of school reforms. To jump start the reform process, powerful elites set up competitive systems, built on successful corporate practices nationally and internationally, with monetary rewards to find the right answers for improving schools.[4]

It was not that previous generations of US educators had ignored world class standards, rigorous criteria, performance competency, accountability measures, or the national pressures for school reform. It was, however, that previous generations of educators (i.e., school leaders) were able to hold their anxiety in check long enough for (1) there to be classroom choices and creativity within local schools, and for (2) accountability to include productivity as measured by a person's whole life, not just by a score on a single quarterly examination. The role of school leadership was seen as nourishing the conditions for classroom teaching and learning.

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[4] This is not the time to engage in the ongoing debate over the role that schools play in the overall education of a society. Both schools and social systems of education matter and make a difference. What is relevant to this discussion is to make visible inclusive arguments linking schools to social development. To quote Jacques Barzun (1954) in *Teacher in America* (New York: Doubleday), "Teaching is not a lost art but the regard for teaching is a lost tradition" (p. 16). The role of cultural history for educational leadership is to keep true American traditions of all generations alive for discussion and debate.

A representative model of this progressive school leadership emerged in the writings of Alice Miel (1961). As a progressive educator, she conceptualized administration/supervision as four dimensions: (1) a team of professionals within a complex organization; (2) teachers working within a network of institutional policies and procedures supervised by administrators; (3) practitioners working together with materials and equipment within defined spaces and on a schedule; and last (4) as professionals accountable for student achievement in the school as a whole (p. 222). "To foster creativity in teaching, ways must be found to encourage constructive difference within the limits of organizational requirements" (Miel 1961, p. 224). Miel understood that such a delicate balance of control and creativity called for constant experimentation.

Her four leadership dimensions were based on research findings during the decades of the 1950s and 1960s – yet, each one can be read in contemporary reform terms as if the findings had resulted from the school effectiveness movement of the 1980s, school restructuring of the 1990s, and the current No Child Left Behind Act of the twenty-first century. In other words, educators in the 1960s had a deep understanding of the complexities and pressures of school leadership in contemporary terms which still resonate today. Why then was an "educational crisis" set in motion by *A Nation at Risk* (1983), *Goals 2000* (1988), the New American School Development Corporation (1991–1995), and the NCLB Act of 2002 and 2009? The answer lies in cultural forces which are outside the specifics of within-school improvement practices, but which have always influenced school leadership thinking. Remember that the authors of *A Nation at Risk* recommended essentially no changes in practices, but rather they called for more of the same: longer school days and longer school years. That was the gist of the way for solving the US educational crisis.

The most logical response to any social crisis – educational or not – is a turn toward centralized authorities for answers, whether public and private. Two indicators which measure central support – inputs as well as outputs – are fiscal resources and student achievement. The issue is to determine how well the centralized authorities responded to an education crisis. For, even if that response was limited to longer days and longer school years, there should still be increases in inputs and outputs.

While federal dollars total approximately 7–10% of the total school revenues, when we calculate the total federal dollars allocated to elementary and secondary education as a percentage of the federal budget, that percentage of monies spent on education (Table 2.2) consistently ranged from 2% to 3% from 1960 to 2005.

Economic data, although often read as definitive answers, are always open to interpretations. Two nongovernmental sources, Rethinking Schools and the Urban Institute, confirm that very limited dollars were provided by the federal government for education during this era of centralization and crisis.

> Although the dollar amounts sound impressive, federal spending on education has never amounted to more than 2.5% of total federal budget outlays, and the federal share of total expenditures for elementary and secondary education is actually less now than it was in 1980. (Kantor 1996/1997)

Table 2.2 Federal education support: fiscal years 1965–1995 [in millions of dollars]

Fiscal year	Elementary and secondary dollars [in billions]	Total federal outlay (percentage of education to the federal budget) [in billions]
1960	>.5 (est)	92.2 (<1%)
1965	1.9	118.2 (2%)
1970	5.8	195.6 (3%)
1975	10.6	332.3 (3%)
1980	16.0	590.9 (3%)
1985	16.9	946.4 (2%)
1990	21.9	1,253.2 (2%)
1995	35.2	1,515.8 (2%)
2000	38.2	1,789.1 (2%)
2005	71.5	2,479.4 (est) (3%)

Notes:

The data for 1960 is an estimate from http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/11_02/Kantor. shtml#9

Elementary and Secondary Dollars, 1965–1995 from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d95/ dtab351.asp

Total Federal Outlay, US Office of Management & Budget, http://w3.access.gpo.gov/usbudget/ fy2006/pdf/hist.pdf

2000 and 2005 combination of federal discretionary and mandatory requests

In a report by the Urban Institute, Clark et al. (2001) wrote:

> While at one time education was the third largest federal area for spending on children, by 1997 it was fifth. Still, federal spending on education was quite small in 1960, so by 1997 it was a significant multiple of its 1960 level, whether viewed by growth in real dollars (from $2.3 billion to $15.1 billion) or in growth in share of GDP (from 0.09 percent to 0.19 percent). (n.p.)

US policymakers continue to use the platform of school reform without providing "excessive" federal spending to address the educational crisis. When we turn to evidence of outputs, the findings are also disappointing: there has been no statistical improvement on standardized test scores, whether from the National Report Card (NAEP) or from college admissions scores (ACT/SAT) over the past three decades (Table 2.3).

The NAEP report card for 17-year-olds indicates a 285 scale score in 1971 and 286 scale score in 2008 (not statistically significant different) during the era that included the "crisis" of *A Nation at Risk*, Goals 2000, Comprehensive School Reform, the New American Schools Development Corporation, and No Child Left Behind. Similarly, American College Testing (ACT) scores[5] have been flat from 1967 to 1994.

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[5] From 1976 to 2005, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores for the verbal sections were flat: from 509 to 508; in math, however, the scores rose from 497 to 520, but then have dropped to 515. Likewise, verbal scores have dropped to 502 by 2007. Source: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Table 2.3 American College Testing (ACT) program scores and characteristics of college-bound students: 1967–1994

Test subject area	1967	1970	1980	1990	1994
Composite score	19.9	18.6	18.5	20.6	20.8
English	18.5	17.7	17.8	20.5	20.3
Math	20.0	17.6	17.3	19.9	20.2
Reading	19.7	17.4	17.2	NA	21.2
Science reasoning	20.8	21.1	21.0	NA	20.9

Source: The American College Testing Program, Iowa City, IA, High School Profile Report, annual. http://www.census.gov/prod/1/gen/95statab/educ.pdf

For academic year ending in year shown. Except as indicated, test scores and characteristics of college-bound students. Through 1985, data based on 10% sample; thereafter, based on all ACT tested seniors

Note: Beginning 1990, not comparable with previous years because a new version of the ACT was introduced. Estimated average composite scores for prior years: 1989, 20.6; 1988, 1987, and 1986, 20.8. 2 Minimum score, 1; maximum score, 36. Prior to 1990, social studies; data not comparable with previous years. Prior to 1990, natural sciences; data not comparable with previous years. Beginning 1985, data are for seniors who graduated in year shown and had taken the ACT in their junior or senior years.

NA Not available

Comprehensive School Reform Models (CSR) and the New American Schools (NAS)

Many educational research studies have reported that school administrators and teachers oppose reforms when they are simultaneously introduced in concert with other district or school level initiatives (e.g., Donmoyer and Galloway 2010; Wonycott and Bogotch 2000). Not only do such practices prevent researchers from being able to attribute any successful outcomes to one specific reform model, but perhaps more importantly, it dilutes the commitment and efforts of school practitioners. Yet, it is almost common practice at the school district level for superintendents to have schools compete with one another in deciding on particular reform models, necessitating time and effort devoted to grant reviews, program training, and model compliance with external authorities while taking time from self-directed, professional development. Locally, school district superintendents have presented themselves to communities and state entities as being reform-oriented simply by applying for participation in national grant competitions. Naming and choosing reforms are easier – but no substitute – for implementing reforms. Yet, given the political climate created by crisis, any show of decisive executive leadership might be considered necessary for superintendents and state commissioners to keep their jobs. Such state and school district efforts would appear to be more about the aggrandizement of power and individual political gain, regardless of the good intentions of school reformers. Instead of open systems' thinkers who build and innovate from "experience," "time," and "feelings" to guide schools through educational

experiments, district superintendents have become distant CEOs or more accurately Chief Compliant Officers.

The 1980s and 1990s saw a tidal wave of highly prominent university professors putting forth new, exciting ideas for whole school improvement. Each of the models had unique strengths. With start-up funds from well-known private corporations (e.g., Chevron and Accelerated Schools), government funding (Porter-Obey), endorsements from national associations (e.g., the Education Commission of the States and the Coalition for Essential Schools), or by creating a reform status based on membership in a highly selective network, the "break-the-mould" models in the Comprehensive School Reforms became "must-have" reform brand names (for state and district political officials). Among the most prominent programs were Accelerated Schools, Henry Levin, Stanford University, the Coalition of Essential Schools, Theodore Sizer, Harvard and Brown Universities, E.D. Hirsh, Core Knowledge/Cultural Literacy, the University of Virginia, Success for All, Robert Slavin, Johns Hopkins University, Edison Project, Chris Whittle, and the School Development Program, James Comer, Yale University. Not to be part of these networks relegated schools and districts to being viewed as ordinary or as a control group school/district – with little status. That said, these new brand name design models were now being introduced on top of other ongoing school and district reforms.

Promoting the waves of high profile school reforms were the US president, governors, and business men who came together in 1989 in a summit agreeing to six goals (Goals 2000). The New American School Development Corporation was established as a conduit for promoting more reforms underwritten and monitored by powerful elites in business and government (with subsidized federal dollars: Porter-Obey). A competition was announced and 30,000 Requests For Proposals (RFPs) were distributed nationwide. Close to 700 "break-the-mould" proposals were received from 47 states. A review process was established with each proposal read by at least three people. One hundred nineteen proposals were selected and from that group, 16 were submitted to the NAS Board of Directors. Eleven were finally accepted as eligible for up to 3 million dollars in Phase I design funding. Ultimately, seven proposals moved forward, encompassing 550 schools in 26 states: all with the goal to improve student outcomes. Now added to the list of CSR models were seven new NAS designs: Atlas Communities, Co-Nect Schools, Expeditionary Learning Outbound, Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute, National Alliance for Restructuring Education, Purpose Centered Education: Audrey Cohen College, and Roots and Wings.

The combined CSR and NAS designs were sponsored and supported by private philanthropic foundations, federal innovation programs, and professional associations such as the American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Education Association. Each NAS design school was eligible for $50,000 per year. Therefore, between CSR and NAS, the United States was clearly invested in a privatized research and development approach to public school improvement (Timpane 1991 cited in Glennan 1998).

During Phases II and III of the NAS reform process, the Rand Corporation, a highly prominent West Coast Think Tank was hired to conduct evaluation studies of the NAS implementation. In 1998, two preliminary reports were published. One found that attributing school outcomes to a design alone was inappropriate (Glennan 1998, p. 79) – thus confirming that multiple reforms, local, state, and national were ongoing within individual schools and districts. With respect to implementation, the positive factors identified were stable leadership, a stable – noncrisis environment, a culture of trust, and school-level autonomy with resources provided by the district. Yet, the evaluators repeatedly found that *progress was slow* and that resources, commitment time, and effort mattered. And instead of stable leadership and a noncrisis environment, the evaluators reported continual district and school changes in leadership as well as district budget crises (Bodilly 1998).

Educational researchers uncovered other important reform lessons: for example, in terms of internal school improvement practices, we have a better understanding of school cultures, professional learning communities, and shared decision-making/ distributed leadership. From the 1960s forward, we have learned that personalized instruction, academic press, and student/teacher voice are all important to student engagement, if not also to student achievement. We also know that collectively made decisions on curricula and pedagogy improves a school's professional culture (Rowan et al. 2009), but that the implementation strategies for student achievement often requires a more directive curricular leadership (e.g., Success for All) which is a result of prescribed and scripted programs, reforms that elicit negative responses from teachers.

What we still do not know is whether (1) implementation fails because of implementation processes/practices or because of the limitations/deficiencies of the reforms themselves (Rowan et al. 2009); (2) whether any model from those studied by NAS/CRM merit scaling up (Bodilly 1998; Glennan 1998); or (3) what school improvement might look like if there was less emphasis on specific – proprietary – school improvement designs and more emphasis on learning from experiences from the designs viewed collectively and studied integratively [often prohibited by the design initiators themselves].

From a traditional historical perspective, it may be premature to draw conclusions regarding CSR and NAS reforms, but, for the purposes of this leadership for learning analysis, it is clear that the United States, as a nation, lost over two decades of exciting school reform ideas as the not-so invisible hand of self-interest, proprietary models, competition, and market ideologies dominated school reform efforts throughout the 1980s and 1990s. It was as if both prominent school reformers – many of whom have contributed wonderful innovative ideas – had forgotten the valid implementation lessons learned from 1960s and 1970s research on school change (e.g., Miles and Fullan on organizational and professional development) and implementation (e.g., McLaughlin and Berman on mutual adaptation and federal initiative knowledge dissemination). But, of course, this is not the last word on school reform in the United States.

What Will History Say?

History as an organizing scheme connects knowledge to past events; but the lessons of history – according to Dewey – must not come too far after the events themselves – else the knowledge gleaned from history cannot be used effectively for leadership and decision-making. History needs to be alive if it is to be of benefit to today's school leaders. But how do we make US history a matter of professional knowledge and a public concern? How do we bring the two aspects of cultural history – political governance and economic power – into the public's discourse? How do we connect public schools to the growth and development of society as Mann and Dewey envisioned?

During the first 200 years, political governance dominated the discourse of US public schools. More recently, economic power as a market force, competition, and self-interest has dominated school reforms. US policymakers in government and business see public schools – schools that educate other people's children – in need of reform and in crisis. A close study of our history would have suggested that the ambiguities of the US federalist system allow for education to "expand and contract like an accordion, making the music required in different historical contexts" (Ellis 2007, p. 225). Such readings of history might alert educators to the possibilities of a "new localism" (Crowson and Goldring 2009) or, more in line with Madison, Hamilton, and Jay, a populist revolt. Fiscal and achievement data from the 1960s to the present showed that there was an increase in centralized power coupled with insignificant monetary inputs and with little-to-no significant standardized test score gains in student achievement. But, instead, of localism or populism, the educational "crisis" opened the door for university and business elites to centralize control with minimal funding.

These elites, regardless of their institutional affiliations, chose not to embrace educational research protocols or democratic school practices, following instead the invisible hand of self-interest, markets, and competition. They avoided sharing data, knowledge, or skills with one another as the reform programs maintained exclusive and proprietary rights. When political governance structures emerged in the personhood of presidents and governors, they embraced economic power structures by promoting charter schools, vouchers, the Gates Foundation reforms, the Race to the Top, or Towards Education 2014 – as educational history repeats itself. Why?

We noted that educators live and work in the present. Many today know only NCLB. Whereas CSR and NAS were school reforms based on brand names, NCLB is a generic reform for all children. It is this brand name-generic dichotomy that calls for critical cultural studies. We know that at the turn of the twentieth century, Henry Ford was able to make the newly invented automobile affordable to middle class families by transforming a brand name into a generic. His Model T car was a product of standardization, of parts built on efficient factory assembly lines. As a business man, he understood that if he sold enough cheap-generic cars, then he could still make a profit. If we apply Fordist thinking to education, then NCLB is today's Model T – an inexpensive reform for the general population, but one that has enormous profit potential for entrepreneurs.

Thus, as US policymakers experienced the painfully slow progress in school reform models and the lack of positive student achievement data that came from the luxury proprietary designs, they turned towards the factory model of NCLB. It had worked to transform the transportation industry. Why not education? Could there be a place for generics or standardization within the US school system? In a consumer-oriented society, there will always be an appeal for both brand names and affordable generics. In today's market, luxury reform is called Gates: it has status and costs minimal dollars to fund. But for most of those working in public education, the approach to school improvement is based on the use of "generics" such as NCLB – a remedy to fix schools based on fixed standards scored by publisher-prepared, for-profit, exams: an inexpensive reform using a standardized solution to school improvement.

Given all these reform dynamics – brand names and generics, the latest evaluation findings of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's reform of high schools are not surprising. School districts and municipalities vied for grants ranging from 1 to 100 and ten million dollars depending upon the number of schools and the size of the districts. The 17 winners – Anderson Union, CA, Baltimore, MD, Chicago, IL, Cincinnati, OH, Cotati-Rohnert Park, CA, Denver, CO, El Dorado, CA, Milwaukee, WI, New York City, NY, Oakland, CA, Oklahoma City, OK, Providence, RI, Ravenswood, CA, Sacramento, CA, St. Paul, MN, West Clermont, OH, and Worchester MA – from 2001 to 2005 reported the following research results: the overriding conclusion: *progress was slow!* In addition, Gates' small school reforms produced more positive attitudes among students who felt supported by teachers; students were more interested in schoolwork than in conventional schools and thus had higher attendance rates; however, the evaluators found that academic progress mirrored the district as a whole. New schools experienced "growing pains" (lower school climate and teacher burnout and difficulty in teacher recruitment) while existing schools that added "small school reforms" experienced even more implementation problems in trying to redefine themselves physically and academically. Last, even with Gates' monies, there were limitations of funding (American Institute of Research 2006).

In the meantime, the cities and states which are left out of the small Gates' network have to make do with NCLB. Thus, we have an open system of multiple entities, born out of the local control of 50 states in which 13,500 school districts function but now having to rely almost exclusively upon centralized authorities for educational policy. Given the US history of decentralization, democracy, local control, why do we suppose that not one of the 13,500 school district superintendents rediscovered the national experiment by enlisting her/his community in a different course of action? Educators, we assert, hold in their hands the fiduciary trust of a nation. The political governance side of the equation has always allowed centrists, moderates, and radicals to debate, interpret, reinterpret, as was intended by the framers of the constitution. Educational leaders, however, need to be aware of the clash of values good and bad and to find their educational voices in the American traditions of experimentalism and pragmatism. We need the philanthropy of nongovernmental benefactors, but we also need to rediscover our sense of agency. Leadership for learning at the policy table must always speak as a teacher/learner through constitution/institutional/theoretical frames [for social justice]. Leadership

for learning as educators can make sense of the chaos, at least contextually, for a generation. Leadership for learning is no less than a good civics lesson in democratic discourse and debate. Leadership for learning goes beyond the school building and into the culture of a nation – all nations.

What would it take for leadership for learning to reemerge in the United States, contextually, competitively, and with a sense of collective/cultural agency? In most of the world, centralized authorities are located in a Ministry of Education. In the United States, our central government has federal authorities – delimited by state and local governments. In the case of education, 97.5% of the money comes from state and local sources. Thus, school improvement in the United States is not a matter of top down or bottom up meeting somewhere in the middle. There is no logical or equitable or political middle when the dollars are spread across a divide of 2.5% and 97.5%. In other words, what we have been calling economic power resides in a few wealthy individuals and a few elite institutions who waste words on education, but who do not spend their own dollars for reform. They use their status and platforms in government, business, and universities to talk about the education crisis, rather than fix it. To quote Jacques Barzun (1959) regarding business men who engage in philanthropy, "it is diverting at any age to play school" (p. 200).

We began this essay by noting how school reform has relied upon two default positions: the names of great men and women are substituted for social and cultural dynamics and that lip-service support is given for contextual differences while ongoing practices hold tight onto school traditions. These default positions emerge whenever educational leaders do not make public education a public concern and let others define public education as a crisis. We end now with a third and final default position: education policy as a political platform for politicians and business men who seek notoriety without any substantial investment in time, study, or resources. Throughout history, public education has served as THE political default position between real societal and global crises. The responsibilities for leadership for learning, thus, remains in the hands of the people who believe in democratic processes sincerely enough to think that public schools in the United States ought to reflect democracy in the practices of teaching, learning, and leading. It is up to educational leaders in a society to lead school reforms and put public education back into historical and cultural perspectives.

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Chapter 3
Leadership and Learning: The Canadian Context

Larry Sackney

Educational Governance and Policy Environments

In Canada, as elsewhere, there has been considerable effort to improve student learning outcomes. In order to understand improvement efforts in Canada, it is important to understand that education is a provincial responsibility. An intergovernmental body founded in 1967 called the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) serves as a forum to discuss policy issues; to undertake activities, projects, and initiatives in areas of mutual interest; to cooperate with national education organizations, and the federal government; and as an instrument to represent the educational interests of the provinces and territories internationally (www.cmec.ca/programs). Among other work, CMEC is also currently involved in priority activities related to Aboriginal education, literacy, assessment, international testing, education data and research, and education for sustainable development.

In Western Canada, the ministers of education have established the Western protocol wherein they collaborate on curriculum development, teacher certification, and research and policy issues. The reason for this convergence in practices is to facilitate the mobility of Canadians, as well as to provide education that meets the needs of a globalized knowledge society in the twenty-first century. The end result is that even though provinces have the responsibility for providing education there is considerable similarity from province to province. Furthermore, explicit attention at the provincial and district levels is paid to the research on teaching and learning. Consequently, policy initiatives tend to reflect the extant research knowledge that percolates throughout the systems.

As in many parts of the world, learning communities have become the reform effort for school improvement initiatives across Canada (Sackney and Mitchell 2008). The premise of this model is that, as educators reflect on the consequences of their

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practice, develop and experiment with new practices, and work collaboratively to share effective practices with one another, they build greater capacity to solve difficult educational problems and create exciting learning environments for students. Unfortunately, building collaborative cultures is difficult work because of weak teacher efficacy, insufficient time for teachers to meet and plan, a fragmented vision of teaching and learning, poor conflict management skills, and weak administrative leadership (Mitchell and Sackney 2009). As a result of considerable recent research (e.g., Leithwood et al. 2006; Marzano et al. 2005; Marzano and Waters 2009) on the importance of leadership at the school and district levels to improve teaching and learning in schools, provincial governments have shifted policy attention to building leadership capacity across these domains.

Leadership Development

In their chapters, Pedwell et al. (2010) and Burger et al. (2010) outline efforts by Ontario and Alberta to improve student learning outcomes by improving leadership across an entire education system. This focus reflects research that the principal is the second most important factor after the teacher, in terms of impact on student learning (Leithwood et al. 2004). Part of this strategy has been to engage school leaders in ways that build their support, commitment, and capacity. This includes building professional learning communities within and across schools and districts and using evidence-based inquiry to inform instructional practice. An interesting development in Ontario has been the establishment of the Minister's Principal Reference Group whose role is to provide advice on ministry policy and program implementation. As part of the leadership development program more emphasis has been placed on mentoring newly appointed leaders and on improved performance appraisal of principals and vice-principals (Leithwood et al. 2010). Recently, mentoring of newly appointed district leaders is also being tested.

An important step taken by Ontario to improve leadership has been the development of the Ontario Leaders Framework (OLF) which describes the competencies/standards and practices of good leadership. As part of its first year leadership strategy (2008–2009), the ministry provided pilot programs and supports to districts and schools, as well as the development of a School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) to be used for assessing schools. In the second year (2009–2010) of the strategy, every school district is required to have a succession and talent development plan. Another interesting development has been the evolution of a coaching model for struggling secondary schools.

In the fall of 2009 the ministry groups selected five OLF core leadership capacities for attention (understanding how to work with data, goal setting, collaboration and teamwork, providing feedback, and linking resources to priorities). A social network theory (Kilduff and Krackhardt 2008) was utilized to transfer the skills. Initial assessment points to a positive relationship between approaches to principal evaluation based on professional growth and accountability (Leithwood et al. 2010).

Also, a Principal's Congress has been launched to distribute tacit knowledge of expert school leaders.

Alberta has similarly developed principal quality practice standards and the Alberta School Leadership Framework (ASLF). This document sets out provincial policy on school leader growth, supervision, and evaluation. The Framework of School System Success (FSSS) further extends the notion of school leadership nested within the practice of high performing school systems. This document focuses on the qualities of high performing school districts and syntheses research evidence combined with the wisdom and experience of practicing superintendents. The 2009 framework outlines 5 themes and 11 dimensions of collective system leadership practices that are considered to have the greatest impact on student learning. These five themes include vision and direction setting, organization design and alignment, capacity building of people, relationship building, and managing instruction. These core elements reflect the synthesis of research on leadership excellence conducted by Leithwood et al. (2006).

Internal and External Accountability

All provinces administer Assessment for Learning (AfL), which includes external provincial achievement tests in Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. A new initiative by Alberta Education is the building of data systems that support connectivity between external and classroom-based assessments as a practical way of providing a more holistic approach to data access, use, comprehension and interpretation (Burger et al. 2010). This development will help to more closely align data collected in individual classrooms, across grades in the school, in schools across the district and the province. These value-added approaches incorporate non-cognitive or psycho-social measures that can influence student attitude toward school and learning.

Burger et al. contend that one of the challenges of building school and district leadership capacity is the need for empirical evidence that is rooted in timely and accurate data. A comprehensive data system should also capture environmental factors that impact on student learning. They argue that, given the changing role of the school principal, the principal has to be an instructional leader who defines effective teaching and learning practices based on evidence-based data and thereby enhance learning outcomes.

Changing Teacher and Community Demographics

A problem being confronted by teachers and administrators in schools in Canada is the changing nature of communities. Increasingly, more people immigrate to Western countries than ever before (Census Canada 2003). Ryan (2010) notes

that in some of the larger city schools upwards of 60 ethnicities may be represented in their student populations. Many of these individuals come from poverty and difficult environments, making the challenges of understanding and making sense of culturally diverse populations very difficult for teachers and principals.

An additional problem faced by provinces is the disturbing success rate of Aboriginal students in comparison to their peers. According to Richards (2008), the most recent data from the 2006 Census show widening Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal education gaps for young relative to older groups. Schools that operate in these environments often struggle with poverty, learned helplessness, despair, and high levels of abuse, addiction, and violence. The result is that about 40% of students attain secondary schooling, with dropouts starting at the middle year levels.

Another issue confronting schools is that fewer teachers are seeking the principalship because of the demanding nature and complexity of the work. Similar challenges are facing educational leadership at the district level. Fink (2010) found that the demands placed on the principal have created a "succession challenge" in which school districts are hard pressed to replace their retiring "boomer generation" leaders with "Gen Y" leaders. Fink contends that there are sufficient numbers of people to assume the principalship in some areas but they are not the quality individuals necessary to enhance teaching and learning. Gen Y individuals are unwilling to conform to policies developed by older generations, which they find as being inconsistent with their values, goals, and life styles. As a result, many provinces are putting in place programs and policies that will hopefully attract sufficient numbers of highly qualified individuals into leadership positions.

Conclusion

Improving learning for all K-12 students in public education and preparing students for the twenty-first century world of work and learning is a concern for all provinces in Canada. Canadian provinces, as are some other countries, are scaling up their leadership development efforts. The assumption appears to be that focusing on improving the capacities of individual leaders and groups of leaders will lead to improvements in student learning. Leithwood and his colleagues (2010) are somewhat skeptical of the direct effect approach, since school level leadership is considered to have an indirect effect on student learning. They argue that leaders will be successful to the extent that they can influence the variables that are under their control. Other variables, such as teacher instructional repertoire and curriculum knowledge, parental involvement and support, dysfunctional families, socio-economic conditions of the family, and the community environment, are variables that are in many instances beyond the control of the leaders. It seems that too often systems focus on one or two variables and hope to see substantial learning efforts. What is required is to collect evidence of the extent to which the shift in focus results in improved student learning. We also need to remember that many variables contribute to improved teaching and learning. Recipes will not work.

Effective system-wide improvement is a challenging and complex process. What appears to be occurring within the Canadian context is a timely shift toward a more closely aligned effort by all partners in the education system. Too often reforms are disconnected and do not align with what occurs in districts and schools (Sackney 2006). What is beginning to appear is a better interconnected and holistic policy framework across boundary systems to support leaders in improving teaching and learning. There is more emphasis being placed on having transparent and open systems that use data and evidence as a basis of improvement. Also, there is a shift from a blame and shame process to a networked, capacity building approach. For a long time there has been need for policies and reforms to provide coherence and alignment with past and future practices across systems. Perhaps the time has arrived. Both Leithwood et al. (2010) and Pedwell et al. (2010), on the basis of Ontario's experiences, have concluded that large-scale reform can have some influence on students' learning, provided leadership development strategies are aligned with educational reform goals and initiatives within the learning environment. Practicing leaders need to envision future goals and initiatives if they are to be successful in improving schools. Senge et al. (2005) call this "presence" – "letting come", of consciously participating in a larger field of change. When this happens, they contend, "the field shifts, and the forces shaping a situation can move from re-creating the past to manifesting or realizing an emerging future" (p. 15).

At the same time, we must remember that true student learning will only come about if the focus of policies and practices is on learning for everyone. Until we place deep learning as the central purpose in schools, not much will change. It requires a profound shift in how we think, talk about, understand, and practice education.

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Chapter 4
Leadership Issues and Experiences in Latin America

Beatrice Avalos

Introduction

After more than two decades of reform efforts in Latin America affecting various components and processes of the education systems with the purpose of widening access and securing retention in the education system, quality remains a key issue almost in every country of the region. However, there is greater understanding of the combination of factors affecting pupil learning and advancement in their schooling process within countries, some of which are common throughout the systems and some which respond to economic and cultural diversity.

It is clear that each country's GNP and proportion of spending in education is correlated with school achievement results (SERCE 2008) and that there are big differences among countries in this respect. The second regional study on educational achievement in Latin America and the Caribbean known as SERCE (2008) was able to distinguish four types of countries in relation to learning results. The first type includes only Cuba with an achievement average in all the learning areas measured (mathematics, reading and science) of more than one standard deviation above the regional average. The second group includes Chile, Costa Rica, México, Uruguay and the state of Nueva León in Mexico with results above the regional average but less that one standard deviation. The third group of countries has results around the average and includes Argentina, Brazil and Colombia. The fourth group is below the average in all measured learning areas and covers Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Dominican Republic. With the exception of Cuba that appears as an outlier, countries in the second group and third group such as Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, México and Uruguay have annual per capita incomes around US$9,000 while Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay in the fourth group are among the poorest countries in the region with annual per capita incomes below US$4,500. Not only are countries diverse in terms of their income but also

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in the rural/urban distribution of their population and in linguistic and cultural characteristics.

The effect of school conditions on learning appears as an important factor in the SERCE study, but its impact is reduced once socio-economic conditions are considered. Only in Cuba do school factors explain 50% of the achievement variance, while in the other countries they explain from 5% to 30% (SERCE 2008). On the other hand, three of the poorest countries (Nicaragua, Paraguay and Dominican Republic) have low learning results independently from socio-economic origins of the student population. In all of these contexts, however, there have been efforts to improve the quality of education ranging from teacher professional development opportunities, intercultural curriculum restructures in countries such as Bolivia and Guatemala, public funding for schools to increase the participation and retention of poor populations as provided in Brazil through the programme known as FUNDEF (*O Fondo de Manutençao e Desenvolvimento do Ensino Fundamental e de Valorizaçao de Magisterio*), as well as widespread provision of computers and school libraries in several systems such as Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Costa Rica or El Salvador. In planning and implementing changes and reforms, the systems operate according to diverse degrees of centralisation/decentralisation. Education provisions in countries with a federal system such as Argentina, Brazil and México are clearly managed at state or provincial level, while other countries such as Chile have decentralised management of public schools by municipalities, but retain centralised curriculum and pedagogic development decision-making as well as monitoring and supervision of schools. Devolution of a degree of power to school management committees that include parents was and continues to be a notorious feature of schools in Salvador and Nicaragua (Neubauer and Trigo de Silveira 2009). However, school-based management without competent school leadership can be a factor of inequality among schools and learning opportunities, as illustrated in the case of Mexico's Programa Escuelas de Calidad (Cárdenas in EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009).

Within this general context of diverse innovations and persistent shortcomings as noted in the SERCE (2008) achievement results especially for a group of countries in the region, attention is increasingly being focused on what can be accomplished at school level in terms of management and teaching processes. There are three major areas where there is room for intervention: (a) increased funding for schools with fragile pupil populations as has successfully been proven useful in the case of Brazil; (b) better monitoring and supervision of school and learning processes; and (c) improved pedagogical leadership on the part of school managers as well as of teachers.

While increased funding is essential to improve the resources available in schools and for teachers who do contribute to learning as reported in the SERCE's (2008) evaluation (computers, infrastructure and services), this funding will not achieve its purposes if school management and teacher capacity are weak and lacking in leadership. As a result of this recognition, specific funds have been allocated through external aid and country efforts making schools the direct beneficiaries of interesting experiments for the development of leadership and teacher professional

skills in intercultural education among Guatemala's Maya speaking communities (GTZ 2005), to increase achievement in the poorest schools as in Chile (Avalos 2009) or through teacher 'quality circles' in Paraguay (Achinelli 1998). Increasing autonomy of schools to manage their affairs including the hiring and firing of teachers contributed to improve schooling in countries under war conditions as was the case of Salvador and Nicaragua in the eighties and nineties (Neubauer and Trigo de Silveira 2009), but as the articles included in this Handbook show school autonomy is not a widespread practice in the region.

Recognition of the need to increase the leadership capabilities at school level has led to various initiatives such as that sponsored by PREAL (Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas, www.preal.org) and documented for the case of Chile in the paper by Weinstein et al. At a recent workshop organised by PREAL, two cases of research and development projects were presented for Panamá and the Dominican Republic. The Panamanian project involved the formulation and piloting of a set of competencies for school principals and an action-research procedure to develop these competencies in school principals, including further validation of the effectiveness of the experience (PREAL 2010). A similar experience was carried out in the Dominican Republic with the support of PREAL and local academic and government institutions, with the purpose of strengthening leadership capacity at district and school level.

The articles on Latin America included in this Handbook provide readers both with discussion of issues that touch on the history and current development of monitoring and supervision at school level (Aguerrondo & Vezub), the leadership opportunities of school principals in the region as a whole (Vaillant) and more closely on the situation of school principals in Chile (Weinstein et al.), as well as the account of a successful experience for developing pedagogical leadership among Dominican Republic primary school teachers (Montenegro). The four articles cover two of the three key policy issues of concern noted above: monitoring and supervision of the quality of schooling and teaching on the one hand and pedagogical leadership of principals and teachers on the other. More to the point they deal with a series of tensions that surround these themes: between managerial roles and pedagogical or instructional leadership, between authority, power and control on the one hand, and degree of autonomy to exercise leadership on the other; between provision of support and appropriate professional development on the one hand and demands for accountability on the other; between centralisation and decentralisation; and tensions produced by the contextual effects of types of school management (public and private).

From the optic of the monitoring and supervision of the quality of schooling, Aguerrondo & Vezub provide a picture of the transition in the Latin American region from the inspectorate function to a supervisory role on the part of ministry of education functionaries appointed to visit and support schooling processes. They highlight the failures of decentralisation efforts that do not adequately reach schools and the need for more direct forms of contact with the educational authorities (ministries). In this way, they document the changing role of the monitoring function to a one of closer support to school and teacher development. The authors hold that

'two decades of efforts to apply the effective school model have shown that school autonomy without pedagogical authority results in institutional abandonment', implying by this that there is a need for centralised support in the development of pedagogical leadership and that the ministries of education through their mediators (supervisors) have a role in this. Given the complexity of carrying out both a support role as well as a 'monitoring-of-compliance-with-rules-and-regulations' role, some countries have two types of persons in charge of these: the administrative supervisor and the pedagogical adviser (the case of Paraguay), or instead they provide funds to schools to contract pedagogical advice and support from properly state accredited institutions (recently developed in Chile). A more complex division of supervisory functions is highlighted with reference to the case of Ecuador, affecting central, regional, district and school level. Pedagogic advisors and mentors perform the school-support and advisory role to assist principal leadership as well as support the professional development of teachers. The second part of Aguerrondo & Vezub's article dwells on the trend to provide support for school-based professional development based on concepts of distributed leadership as well as collective and collaborative learning.

Liliana Montenegro's article takes the reader more closely to an experience in the development of pedagogical leadership among teachers. The scenario is one of the poorest countries in Latin America with the lowest achievement results in the SERCE regional evaluation. The experience narrated by Montenegro is part of the widespread effort known as CETT (Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training), briefly described in Aguerrondo and Vezub's article, aimed at improving content knowledge and literacy teaching in the first years of the primary school. From the perspective of language teaching, the conceptual basis is on its textual, functional and communicative focus, and from the perspective of teacher learning, on the development of competences using a constructivist approach. Its emphasis on the management or ownership of knowledge by teachers is aimed at the strengthening of pedagogical leadership. The four modalities support these purposes: face-to-face workshops to learn and develop the needed knowledge and skills, circles or discussion groups among teachers to discuss and reflect on the classroom implementation experiences, classroom-based support or accompaniment and the carrying out of an independent study to strengthen their learning efforts. The article not only describes the conceptual model for the professional development, but illustrates it with work carried out with over 3,000 teachers in first to fourth grade, including also the school principals where they work and other educational personnel. Considering the very low level of initial knowledge and skills of many of these teachers, the results achieved have been important, as I was able to observe in meetings and school visits in the Dominican Republic. Montenegro concludes the article reflecting on the factors that have made it successful and on some of the challenges ahead. Among its strong points is to tackle not just the preparation of teachers but to work together with the school, including making its principal a part of the programme, while also maintaining links with other functionaries of the ministry of education and with the community. This insures to a degree the sustainability of the project, something already evident in the commitment of the ministry of education to sup-

port a second phase until 2014. On the other hand, the author acknowledges that without broader actions on the part of government, including greater devolution of powers to school managers and the community in general, greater public investment in education as well as other measures recommended in the SERCE study (2008), the project will impact to an extent but perhaps not nationally as hoped for and expected.

Vaillant and Weinstein et al. address the leadership of school principals in the two remaining studies. Vaillant argues that the role of principals in the Latin American region is not sufficiently highlighted in existing research, and that little is known about their preparation and working conditions.

This leads her to draw from available data what she describes as an X-ray of school principals that includes demographic information, the level of their formal training, the extent to which they have pedagogical responsibilities and their degree of autonomy. We learn that heads of schools are relatively young, that in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, women heads are close to the proportion of female teachers in the system, but that this is not the case in Chile and Peru with dominance of male school principals. Principals differ in the amount of preparation they have. While most of them are teachers and have tertiary level degrees, there is a proportion below this level in Argentina and Brazil, while in Chile many principals have post-graduate qualifications. As far as their responsibilities, most school principals tend to spend a large percentage of their time on administrative matters and very little on pedagogical leadership. Some systems, such as Chile, have two types of leaders in the schools: the school principal and a pedagogic head. However, as the article by Weinstein et al. shows, the instructional leadership of the pedagogic head is very much dependent on the scope allowed for this by the school principal. The most important situation that affects school principals in Latin America is the varying degrees of autonomy they are able to exercise, with for example, practically no role in the hiring and firing of teachers, and little in curriculum development.

The article by Weinstein, Muñoz and Raczynski allows us to learn more closely about the condition of school principals in Chile drawing on ongoing research carried out by the authors, and about policies that are attempting to provide conditions for a more effective leadership of school principals in the country. An important factor highlighted by the study is the structure of the school system that includes public funding for municipal schools as well as schools with private management, which are becoming the largest group in the system. School principals in this publicly funded system are teachers who earn little more than classroom teachers. While policies openly declare that school principals should act as educational leaders, their performance in this respect is not evaluated, and they do not have enough power to carry out these responsibilities in the municipal schools, while they do have such powers in the private subsidised and wholly private schools. Research by the authors, using OECD (2008) categories on attributes of principals, shows differences among school principals in municipal and private subsidised schools. Decision-making power in relation to hiring and firing teachers, managing financial resources and curriculum development is clearly lower among municipal teachers. On the other hand the degree to which school principals as a group are empowered to

set directions, develop people, redesign the organisation and carry out instructional leadership (Leithwood et al. 2006) is considered to be the case for most of the activities involved by not more than half of the principals surveyed and in some cases by less than a third of them. The category most recognised as true to their responsibilities is 'setting directions', whereas the least recognised is 'avoiding distractions among staff, stimulating teachers intellectually and providing instructional support'. While school leaders in municipal schools appear to have fewer powers that those in other types of schools, teachers in these schools value more highly their leadership than teachers in private schools. As noted, the article by Weinstein et al., and the research results presented, provide material for a critical analysis of the situation of school principals in Chile. Not only is it a curious or counter-intuitive finding, as the authors put it, that municipal teachers have greater trust in their leaders who in turn possess less power and autonomy, but it is also noteworthy that while female teachers appear to exert stronger leadership than their male counterparts, they only represent just over half of the school principals as whole and only 38% in municipal schools.

All in all, the four articles that refer to Latin America point to a needed focus in policy-making on the development of strong school principal leadership able to sustain school-based teacher professional development, contribute to curriculum decision-making and monitor advances in learning results in schools. Several countries are moving ahead with actions in this respect, such as reviewing the role of school support via supervisors or other technical assistance or requiring specific preparation for school leaders, but they also need to move further in providing greater autonomy at school level in pedagogic matters as well as in the managing of human resources. The success of teacher empowerment as leaders in the fostering of better learning results, as illustrated in the Dominican Republic case, depends on favourable school environments and school–community relationships and these in turn rest on capable administrative and pedagogical leadership in schools, supported by devolved powers and adequate supervision and monitoring.

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Chapter 5
Transnational and Local Conditions and Expectations on School Leaders

Lejf Moos

NLPM Structures: Government and Local Authorities in Denmark

The Danish education system is part of, and thus influenced by, transnational tendencies. However, as it builds on the Danish structures and cultures it is also special. The Danish process of modernization or restructuring of the public sector and thus the educational sector is characterized by loosening and tightening of couplings at one and the same time (Weick 2001). This is made evident in relations between central agencies and local agents. Fewer prescriptions are produced by the central government for the municipal level and the school level with regard to finance and day-to-day administration. This decentralization has been devolved from state to municipality and to schools.

Similar processes may be observed within schools when leadership is being decentralized from the school leader to teacher teams and to individual teachers (Moos and Kofod 2009). Since the turn of the century teacher teams have been introduced as a permanent link between senior leadership and individual teachers. New tasks and duties are being distributed, thereby loosening the organizational couplings (for example, annual and weekly planning of lessons, parts of finance management), while other tasks were being re-centralized (for example, target setting and evaluation of instruction and learning), thereby tightening organizational couplings.

At the other side of the equation, couplings of educational and curriculum content matter are also being tightened. Relations between the central level and the local and school level have changed profoundly over the past 8–10 years as demands for national standards and accountability have risen. National testing is slowly being implemented in all grades in the school. New systems of quality development and documenting, such as the 'Quality Report', have been introduced

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and implemented. The act in this particular contract form prescribes three areas for evaluation and development (evaluation at the educational level, how the local authority has responded to the former report and a comprehensive report of the frames, processes and outcomes in the school district). Another initiative, taken by the ministry, is to make individual student plans compulsory for each student every year in all subjects (Moos 2009b).

This tendency is accompanied by the move to describe and prescribe the subject content of education in greater detail than previously. This tendency has been apparent for 10–15 years, but now that evaluation and planning technologies are being introduced, it has been given a much higher profile and is much more influential in the everyday life of the school and, as a consequence, in school leadership and in the relations between school leaders and teachers. School leaders in the case schools in the ISSPP project[1] described the trend which is narrowing the compass of schooling. It is manifest in a shift away from the traditional Danish vision of the comprehensive and broad 'Democratic Bildung' (Moos 2008, pp. 229–246), a concomitant lessening of the emphasis on both subject and personal/social competences, towards a focus on basics skills, literacy and numeracy. It is a rapidly growing trend.

Denmark learned from New Zealand, USA and England that the best way to govern public sectors was by adoption of New Public Management (NPM) (Hood 1991). Fundamental to this very broad and diverse tendency are the notions of market place and bureaucracy – the idea that public sectors are best governed in the same way as the private sectors through competition and consumer choice and by a form of bureaucratic transparency.

One of the basic outcomes of a market logic – now known as neo-liberal public management – is growingly evident in the Danish NLPM context. As Stephen Ball (2003) has pointed out, it is a tendency towards homogenization so that when looking through the same set of lenses, diverse phenomenon gets to appear the same. As Ball argues in an education context, when treated within a market logic, it becomes equivalent to commodities delivered by providers to consumers. In current Danish political thinking about leadership and management, leading a school is little different to leading other public sector institutions, currently known as 'Welfare Institutions'. By categorizing several institutions under the same rubric it conveys the impression that they are all alike. All are working to improve the Welfare State it is implied, all in the same way. Thus, the thinking is that we can see and educate professionals of those institutions as one. And that is exactly what is happening in Denmark. The present government has, with assistance from business school thinking, established new diploma and masters programmes in public

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[1] From the Danish part (with John B. Krejsler and Klaus Kasper Kofod) of the 'The International Successful Principal Project' (ISSPP) with Christopher Day, University of Nottingham (England), Ken Leithwood, OISE/Utoronto (Canada), Stephen Jacobson, University of Buffalo, (USA), Jorunn Møller, University of Oslo, (Norway), Olof Johansson, University of Umea (Sweden), David Gurr, The University of Melbourne and Bill Mulford, The University of Tasmania (Australia).

management and leadership, now being offered to all middle leaders and institutional leaders in the public sectors, including school leaders along with leaders of kindergarten, old people's homes, health care institutions and so on.

Another key logic of this version of NLPM is the bureaucracy. In order for national politicians and administrators to be able to tell the public, the voters, that money is being spent wisely and according to political priorities, a number of bureaucratic procedures have been constructed and continuously made more detailed and sophisticated at the national level. Goals and aims are construed as standards, and evaluation of the outcomes is made into more or less tight top down accountability systems and contracts. Most of those systems are constructed in the Ministry of Finance and then spread to all public areas and sectors, so that accountability, accreditation, certification and much else, follow the same logical path. This again is used as an explanation for education or training middle leaders and institutional leaders in the same way and in the same courses as they are expected to lead and manage the same kind of processes.

Backgrounds for Change of Focus

Governance analysis (Dean 1999; Foucault 1976) has found that it is not possible to govern a nation, its institutions and individuals, by economic and administrative regulations through legislation only. This understanding is being supplemented, or perhaps even replaced, by the understanding that societies cannot be governed from one locus, that is, the government. Governments and other authorities must see themselves as 'leaders of leaders' through indirect forms of power in a 'polyphonic setting' (Pedersen 2005). These forms are intended to influence the ways in which institutions and individuals perceive, interpret, understand and act. The actions themselves become less important in this era. The values and norms behind them are more important from a governmental point of view because indirect forms of power – the 'soft governance' – attempt to influence both values and norms.

Paralleling this trend are supra- and transnational agencies such as the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and the European Union Commission, which are developing 'soft forms of governance'. These agencies are not commissioned to use direct forms of power such as regulations – the 'hard governance' – when it comes to education and its governance and politics.

Globalization is an intricate pattern of changes in economics and the divisions of labour as, for example, in the emergence of more than 50,000 massive transnational companies loyal to their shareholders, and therefore able to force governments to shape their financial policies according to a market logic. We see changes in communication such as the Internet and other forms of split-second, global mass media. There are changes in politics as only one global political system de facto remains, effecting at the same time changes in culture (Martin and Schumann 1997). More recent areas where the global interdependencies may be shown appear in financial markets and climate and environmental problems (Moos 2006b).

Barriers between nations in the areas of economics, industry and trade, and culture and communication have been torn down and new relationships and new coalitions and liaisons formed. Some of these new relationships are ad hoc; some are more formal. Most of them have been established primarily to promote economic co-operation. The G8 (2006) (the coalition of eight leading industrial countries includes France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Russia), the World Bank, the OECD and the EU (European Union) are just a few of these powerful agencies.

Supra- and Transnational Agencies

The OECD and EU Commission are two powerful players in the global field of educational politics. They have not been positioned, until now, to make educational policy regulation on behalf of member governments. However, this fact may change in respect of the EU as a result of the Lisbon Agreement. National policies are often seen as being influenced by supranational European Union policies 'that create, filter and convey the globalisation process' (Antunes 2006).

Since both agencies – and their member governments – are interested in international collaboration and inspiration, they have developed alternate methods to influence the thinking and regulation of education in member states. The EU has developed the 'open method of coordination' (Lange and Alexiadou 2007), and the OECD a method of 'peer pressure' (Moos 2006a; Schuller 2006).

At the Lisbon EU Commission meeting, participants agreed to develop a flexible method based on reflexivity and indicators. This method should include flexible governance tools that rely on 'soft law'. A major feature of the open method is reflexivity where member states and institutions are enjoined to inspire one another through 'peer reviews' and policy learning, such as best practices. An important tool is a set of indicators described to enable the identification of 'best practice' (Lange and Alexiadou 2007). CERI (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation), the OECD bureau that manages education and educational research, is a powerful player in the globalization of economies and thereby the restructuring of the nation states (Henry et al. 2001).

Both the EU and the OECD are very much in accordance with the decision of the WTO's GATS agreement (Zanten 2006) to include education services in the areas of free trade thus transforming education to a commodity (Moos 2006c; Pitman 2008) in line with the Lisbon decision.

These influences on policy and practices are neither linear nor straightforward. Lingard (2000) describes them as 'mutually constitutive relations' between distinctive fields or spaces. Lawn and Lingard claim that transnational organizations such as the OECD act as shapers of emerging discourses of educational policy as 'expressed in reports, key committees, funding streams and programmes' (Lawn and Lingard 2002). The main influence comes from the OECD setting the agenda (Schuller et al. 2006), both within the whole organization, for example, international comparisons such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment)

(Hopman 2008) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study), as well as within individual member nations. If a government wants to put an issue on the national agenda, but lacks the strengths to do so on its own, it can call on the OECD for help. The OECD then forms a team that reviews the state of affairs in the member state based on a detailed and comprehensive framework designed by the OECD. The team's report often forms the basis for political action in the states. The review of educational research and dissemination in Denmark is a relevant example (Moos 2006a).

This strategy is explicated in the OECD publication *Education Catalogue* (OECD 1998) as the strategy of 'peer pressure' that 'encourages countries to be transparent, to accept explanations and justification, and to become self-critical' (OECD 1998, p. 2).

Both agencies distinguish between 'hard governance' and 'soft governance'. The choice of terms is interesting because hard law stands for regulations that influence people's behaviour, while soft law/governance influences the way people perceive and think about themselves and their relationships with the outside world. Soft governance therefore influences agents in much deeper ways. While these methods of influence might seem softer, or more educational, the effects of soft influences are more profound.

The social technologies, described by Foucault, and used by these transnational agencies would appear to follow the same pattern, a so-called CCCII model that is building on the liberal core concept of citizen's (or consumers') *choice*, presupposing that citizens are given a screen or background on which to make their choices: therefore there must be *comparisons* between *competitors* and eventually there must be some kind of *indicators* that can function as yardsticks for making the selection and national *interpretations*. This CCCII model runs through most of the contemporary social technologies.

Expectations on School Leaders in Decentralized Structures

For approximately 20 years, some of the duties and responsibilities have been decentralized from government to local authorities and, in most cases, further to schools. This is primarily personnel management, financial tasks and day-to-day management but to some degree also what may be described as educational tasks. However, the Danish government has for the past decade re-centralized some of those responsibilities by prescribing more detailed national standards and developing accountability and evaluation tools such as national tests and quality reports (from schools to local authorities to government).

This means that school leaders – who do both manage and lead – need to be competent in administrative tasks (budgeting, book keeping, planning and monitoring of staff's work, managing purchases of educational material, manage tender procedures on building maintenance, negotiations on wages and terms of work with teachers and several groups of staff and negotiations with external users of the buildings like sports associations and cultural clubs) while also are expected to be

competent in Human Resource Management of teachers and other staff (hiring and firing procedures, continuous professional development, conflict management, establishing of collaboration and teams).

Furthermore, school leaders must be competent in understanding and interpreting national and local regulations which affect schools and education. This means both the Schools' Act (2006) with its general purpose of schools and education, and the local principles for running education and schools devised by the municipal authorities (educational goals, the meaning of Bildung, didactical concepts and understandings on a general level and on all subjects, teaching and learning theories and methods). This also includes being competent in monitoring and evaluating the quality of all educational and co-operations processes.

As schools are part of local communities with other schools and agencies, not to mention parents, school leaders have to be competent in legitimizing the work of their school in accordance with parents' expectations and in competition with other schools, given parental choice of schools.

For the past 5–10 years, we have seen new demands and expectations from the ministry and from local authorities. Some of them are inspired by the transnational influences on education as advocated by the OECD and the European Commission. One of the most important social technologies is the use of international comparisons such as PISA. The political impact of PISA comparisons has been huge in Denmark in pointing out (new) directions for schools and teaching with their emphasis on basic skills (literacy and numeracy) and on proficiencies that are measurable and very often based on national standards. This implies that school leaders have to be able to understand and support teaching that facilitates this kind of learning.

Another social technology that is spreading fast in the management of many public sectors is the contract. A general model is that the ministry prescribes the goals and standards and the financial and legal frames for local authorities and schools. The prescription often contains a catalogue of issues that the ministry wants the local authority, and thereafter the school, to respond and report to. This may be in the form of hard facts such as finances and structures. The contract also leaves room for local authorities and schools to describe local goals for the development over the coming year(s), – focus areas which, of course, fall within the general, national aim. In the following year, the school will self-evaluate according to plans and developments described in the standards and focus areas. The contracts are then passed on and negotiated at the next level up. School leaders must, therefore, be competent in negotiating plans and conditions with both local authorities and school staff, who eventually are the agents who have the responsibility to transfer plans into concrete teaching practices.

Trends in OECD Reports on School Leadership

Two OECD reports have been chosen for one main reason: policy makers often make use of the advice and recommendations in the reports in order to justify their national policies. A singular case in point is PISA comparisons that are used to

argue the need for focusing schooling on basic skills and knowledge. In this way, the OECD perspective is becoming very influential in forming national dominant discourses on what is the correct knowledge and what constitute the best practices.

Improving School Leadership

In 2008, the OECD/CERI published a report: 'Improving School Leadership. Policy and practice' with a second report on 'Case stories and concepts for systemic action'. Both reports build on country reports from 22 countries (out of the 30 OECD member countries). The main findings are that schools in most of the participating countries are getting more autonomous and thus in demand by better leaders; that leadership within schools is getting to be more distributed to teachers or teacher teams; that there is a growing need for schools to collaborate with other schools and institutions in the local community and that there thus is a need for more and better education of school leaders and for finding new ways of attracting applicants to school leadership positions.

The basic assumption behind the report is NLPM decentralization, at the same time underscoring the contemporary trend to look at school leadership within a distributed and a systemic perspective.

Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)

On the basis of surveys of school leaders in 23 countries, the OECD has constructed a set of five school leadership dimensions that are likely to be used by policymakers and perhaps researchers in the future.

1. *Management for school goals*: explicit management via the school's goals and curriculum development. School leaders connect the explicit goals and aims to measurements of student's performance and take action to make teachers adjust to this.
2. *Instructional management*: actions to improve teachers' instruction. School leaders work with teachers to improve weaknesses and address pedagogical problems and problems that disturb classroom practices.
3. *Direct supervision of instruction in the school*: actions to directly supervise teachers' instruction and learning outcomes. Supervision is accompanied by suggesting improvements to teachers. School leaders also monitor student outcomes.
4. *Accountable management*: managing accountability to shareholders and others. School leaders are holding teachers accountable to the national prescriptions on how to improve student learning.
5. *Bureaucratic management*: management actions mostly aimed at bureaucratic procedures. School leaders are concerned with reporting to higher authorities.

These five dimensions point to a diverse understanding of what good teaching and leadership is, but it is interesting that all of them focus on the core of schooling – student learning and as a means to that, teachers teaching. Using this international comparison there are clear implications for school leader competences. They must be competent in theories and practices on learning, in theories and practises on teaching, in curriculum, in measurement of student outcomes and in close interactions with teachers such as monitoring/observation of classroom practices, of professional supervision of teachers and of conflict management with students. On top of that school leaders must be competent in accountability and bureaucratic procedures.

This perspective on school leadership that is often understood as 'instructional leadership' (Leithwood et al. 1994) is important as it points to the core of schools and education: student learning on the basis of teachers' teaching. But it is also somewhat restricted as it leaves out important aspects of the comprehensive foundation for student learning. To mention only a fraction of the forgotten aspects – learning before, outside and after school; peer learning, community learning and capacity building of the community and the unintended learning such as the 'hidden curriculum' (Jackson 1968).

The OECD perspective is also restricted in respect of the aims and outcomes of education as the emphasis is on back-to-basic proficiencies like literacy and numeracy thus neglecting the broader, comprehensive 'Democratic Bildung'.

Leadership Functions: International Successful School Principal Project

Research on school leadership points to four leadership functions that are taken care of by most successful school leaders: Negotiating the direction of school development (including managing the teaching and learning programme), understanding and developing people, redesigning the organization and communicating with local communities (Leithwood and Riehl 2005).

The first point: negotiating the *direction* of school development is the essence of leadership: understanding external expectations and transforming them into a direction for the school in negotiation with staff. This means that school leaders must be competent in understanding and prioritizing political, educational and administrative demands and in motivating staff to make sense of the direction and to find ways of changing their practices.

The second point: *understanding and developing people* is pivotal because the most important actors in schools, when it comes to furthering students' learning, are teachers. Thus, they must be given optimal conditions for performing in classrooms and in teams. School leaders therefore must be competent in understanding professionals and in giving them systemic support (structures and resources) and personal, professional development. Pivotal competencies are empathy, sense making and team-building competences. And it also includes the competence to monitor, support and evaluate teachers' work for the benefit of student learning.

This encompasses competence in understanding evaluation and assessment and guiding teachers in making use of the results of those in order to adjust teaching.

The third point: *redesigning the organization*, means that school leaders must be competent in organizational development, like collaboration in teams and to provide optimal working conditions for teachers and students.

The fourth point: the organization also must be open to parents and *local communities*.

When analysing and discussing how school leaders are acting in order to fulfil these functions it is productive to take account of leadership theory.

Leadership Theory

There exist many theories of leadership and of school leadership (Leithwood and Duke 1999; Hallinger 2003). It is productive to think of leadership as comprising diverse forms of influence. Most of those can be placed in three categories:

- *Direct leadership*: the belief that leaders do the leading by prescribing or persuading followers to do what they would else have not done (Barach and Baratz 1962).
- *Strategic leadership*: the belief that organizations should make short- and long-term strategic plans or strategies (pointing to goals or visions and to the means to reach them) (Weick 2001).
- *Reciprocal leadership*: the belief that leadership is enacted in relations, interactions and communications between the actors – leaders and followers – at many levels. Concepts used in this understanding are setting the scene, setting the agenda, sense making, negotiating (Weick 2009; Moos 2009b; Spillane et al. 2004; Stacey 2000).

School leaders will, from time to time, make use of all three forms of influence. They therefore must be competent in differing ways of influencing individuals and groups/teams, both in direct communication and in formal prescription or inspirational papers. Leadership in schools is for the most part indirect (Leithwood and Day 2007).

School leaders are not present when teachers make their decisions in classroom leadership and teaching nor when teachers in teams discuss and negotiate their practices, thus school leaders must find ways of influencing at a distance and also ways of relating that can further the relations, such as trust (Warren 1999).

Recent Leadership Practice in Danish Schools

In the ISSPP project, we were interested in finding out how school leaders influence the success of their school when it comes to student outcomes (Moos et al. 2005, 2007, 2008; Moos and Kofod 2009). A successful school leader is, in this

perspective, one who leads her/his school in ways that promote and support student outcomes. In the Danish context, student outcomes are not exclusively results in the tests but refer to broader, comprehensive development of content competencies and personal and social competencies which are described as 'Democratic Bildung'. We agree with Leithwood and Riehl (2005) that the most important agent when it comes to student learning is the teacher. Thus, the leadership function is threefold: Setting the direction for the school, empowering teachers and organizing the school. Relating to teachers individually and in groups/teams is, therefore, a crucial aspect of individual school leaders.

In the Danish case we found, in the first phase of the project 5 years ago, many forms of influence. One important feature was a growing focus on networks such as teacher teams. Teachers work in teams within the frames and directions given by – and often negotiated with – senior leadership. Leadership was performed at a distance from the self-governing teachers. At the same time we witnessed a number of social technologies being deployed. Many of these took the form of meetings such as Educational Council Meetings in which all teaching staff and the leadership meet regularly as laid down by School Acts; all staff meetings in which teachers and other staff and the leadership meet once or twice a year, according to regulations; team interviews in which teacher teams meet with the school leader and 'employee development interviews', where individual teachers meet with the school leader once a year. There were also annual plans – teachers plan the instruction for a grade for a year and hand it in to the school leader – and student plans for individual students' progress in all subjects.

Leadership influence is, as a consequence, less direct and more in the form of constructing premises for making decisions through sense making, setting the agenda and in the form of institutionalized influence. Within the teams teachers had to collaborate closely and therefore had to invest their personality in this aspect of the work as well as in their relations to students and classes. It was not enough that they invested their time and presence; they had to be motivated and engaged.

This means that school leaders must be competent in many functions. They must be good communicators who listen to teachers and students and at the same time are able to communicate clearly and purposefully with them. They must be able to lead meetings and teams, requiring that they analyse and reflect on the relations between themselves and teachers, on the teachers' relations to their colleagues and on teachers' relations to students and parents. It also means that school leaders must be able to lead through new social technologies such as the annual plan and student plans, and are therefore able to analyse the teaching and learning needs in any given class.

In one of the case study schools, we found the leadership (school leader and deputy) to be very clear when they stated their position on the direction in which they wanted the school to go. In collaboration with teachers they had developed a networking system where teacher teams carried out all planning, teaching and evaluation on their own. Over the past few years it was becoming more obvious to the school leader that the direction the leadership team wanted the school to take was in great part a translation of the external mandate into internal directions. This can be seen as an effect of the tightening of the couplings, as more detailed

goals and accountability technologies are put effectively in place by the Ministry of Education and local authorities.

Teachers are still autonomous within the frames and directions and social technologies set out by and negotiated with the leadership and within the frames given by the tight and binding collaboration in the teacher teams. 'Teacher autonomy has become collective', school leaders tell us. Maybe? A contradiction in terms?

The leaders (the school leader and deputy) of another school developed a number of forms of self-governance and social technology, which on the one hand, provided opportunities for teacher participation, and on the other, demanded a high level of personal commitment. The leadership was working to develop the school into a learning organization.

The school leader told us that relationships between the school leadership and the teacher teams have been tightened in that the leadership announced a set of common values that the teams had to interpret and negotiate around. At the same time there were clearer and more detailed demands on the teams' self-evaluation.

The biggest challenge seems to be for school leaders to find ways of empowering teachers to some kind of autonomy – self-governance – and negotiating the external and internal demands on them – the collective direction of the school on the basis of external expectations.

Revisiting Schools 5 Years Later

We revisited the same schools 5 years later – in 2008. Over the past 5 years (Moos and Kofod 2009) we can see that the political and administrative move to tighten the couplings between the national level and the local and school level in terms of standards and accountability has been massive. Under the heading 'Quality in Education' the Ministry of Education has put a number of initiatives into action. The dominant discourse of 'a good/successful school' has been challenged in shifting the focus from the traditional vision of 'Democratic Bildung' towards a greater focus on back to basics. A number of social technologies have been put in place to further this policy. 'Quality Reports' from schools to local authorities and further on to the quasi-ministry agency is one such example. Another technology is the set of national curriculum standards and national tests with Annual Student Plans being yet another technology. When looking at each of the three schools, this political strategy seems to have been working. The average of student outcomes measured by the national tests has gone up and school leaders find that the external expectations and technologies have given support to changing the professional discourse of schooling. However, school leaders express concern that this may influence the comprehensive purpose of schooling and its traditional focus on the social and personal competencies as well as on content competencies. They describe the new leadership role as more re-acting to external expectations than acting and leading more proactively on the basis of schools' own educational visions. They call it translating external demands into internal direction.

Much of the inspiration for the new trajectory of Ministerial initiatives – and the arguments used – come from the transnational agencies. PISA and similar comparisons have been brought down to the national level and are expressed by a tightening of national couplings. National testing and new forms of contracts are being introduced as powerful forms of accountability and governance in producing premises and connections which give latitude for schools simply to find ways of complying with expectations.

So the tightening of couplings made by the ministry is a fact of life for schools and school leaders. This leaves the challenge for schools and their staff to be committed and to work hard according to the legislated aims and goals. The loosening of couplings inside schools: self-governing teams, self-evaluations, contracts, networking – to mention a few – are important means of trying to balance the tighter couplings with the teachers' need to have room for manoeuvre in their relations to students.

Thus, school leaders have started to struggle more with the first and third phase of the influence processes: (1) construction of premises, (2) decision-making and (3) connecting decisions to practice (Moos 2009a). They struggle with describing the frames and the aims of the self-governing teams and autonomous teachers in order to be sufficiently precise but yet not too tight. And they are struggling to evaluate whether the decisions have made connections: Have teachers done, what was agreed on or what they were expected to do? This seems to be a new and advanced phase in reflecting on and developing school leader influences in schools that can have great influence not only on the relations between teachers and leaders, but also on the relations between teachers and students in class as well.

School leaders' work has changed over the last decade. External expectations and demands have grown in size and precision through sharper discourses and new, national accountability technologies that leave little room for schools' interpretations. This can be expressed by changing the wording of the most important leadership task: setting the direction, to 'translating the external expectation into internal directions'. This can only be done if the school leader is a good listener to external as well as internal expectations and needs.

At the same time there are more powerful trends towards teamwork and self-governance. This underscores and strengthens the need for school leaders to be able to lead 'at a distance' through discursive influences – setting the agenda and the scene, and helping teachers to make sense – and through social technologies. Some of these new ways of doing things come from the outside and must be transformed into internal tools and strategies. This can only be done, however, if the school leader understands and is able to reflect on organization, teaching and learning.

So it appears that school leadership must build on 'soft governance' in much the same way as the transnational agencies and governments do, and of course as education at large does.

At the same time they have to find the time for leading teachers and other agents with the purpose of student learning because they are very busy with the administration, finances and reporting to the local and national political and administrative levels.

As illustrated, the expectations on school leaders are extremely complex, diverse and often contradictory. They are expected to manage finances, personnel, buildings, plans and relations with the outer world. They are expected to lead teachers, and all other staff categories, individually, in teams and in the whole community, finding directions and developing practices in teaching while creating optimal conditions for student learning.

These expectations clearly exceed what any individual leader is able to fulfil. The Danish case demonstrates the need for leaders to develop the conception of leadership from being only decision making from the top to empowering teachers to participate in informed construction of premises, in wise decision-making and in decision making which shares a passionate commitment with teachers team and individuals. This means shifting the focus from direct forms of influence – 'hard governance' – at all levels in schools towards more indirect and reciprocal forms. One powerful lesson learned from revisiting the schools is that in order to sustain successful leadership (Moos and Johansson 2009) school leaders now have to distribute it. This implies a blend of leadership and management which is interwoven with building capacity, enriching culture and infusing classrooms with a sense of self-belief and self-efficacy.

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Chapter 6
Leadership for Learning in the United Kingdom: Lessons from the Research

Jim O'Brien

Introduction

The United Kingdom contribution to this handbook involved inviting a number of authors from various university education faculties, where there is a strong research interest in school leadership and learning, to write a chapter on a particular area or topic of interest that related to the overall theme – Leadership for Learning. Potential authors were approached and provided with a general indication of the objectives the Handbook was seeking to overtake. A possible list of sub-themes was provided for their consideration but authors were encouraged also to suggest an alternative chapter focus that was of interest to them. The themes actually selected or offered by individual authors from the UK published in this handbook are:

- Researching leadership: Towards a new paradigm (Daniel Muijs: Chap. 9)
- School leadership in the United Kingdom: a policy perspective (Jim O'Brien: Chap. 19)
- Leadership for learning: educating school leaders (Christine Forde: Chap. 21)
- Leaders of learning: Accomplished teachers as teacher leaders (Margery McMahon: Chap. 43)
- Ensuring staff development impacts on learning (Sara Bubb and Peter Earley: Chap. 44)
- Creating participative learning cultures through student leadership (David Frost: Chap. 48)
- Leading school-based networks and collaborative learning: Working together for better outcomes? (Mark Hadfield and Chris Chapman: Chap. 50)
- Leading assessment for learning (Sue Swaffield: Chap. 57)

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The range of interests evidenced in the above chapter titles confirms that the UK authors have a keen interest in the theme of *Leadership for Learning*. They have all researched and published widely in the field and I am grateful for their positive responses to the original invitation and also for the quality and variety of chapters provided.

Much of the UK writing will be recognisable by a reader from elsewhere as our authors illustrate their views by citing the international literature in addition to using examples and data gleaned from UK-based research. That research focus is important, as in the increasingly globalised space that academics and policy-makers find themselves occupying, as it provides evidence for both local and international consideration. Our authors draw on their own data and writing, suggesting that there is a rich vein of research in this field. The UK contribution to this Handbook importantly also includes a chapter by Daniel Muijs that considers the nature and role of research in leadership with suggestions for a new paradigm. 'Leadership and learning' is naturally a major focus for each author no matter the particular perspective or specific theme adopted.

It is perhaps invidious to attempt to summarise or categorise the work of colleagues but that is the role assigned to a section editor. The dominant interests of the UK authors can best be summarised as how students' learning can be enhanced through better approaches to assessment which promotes and advances student learning and greater collaboration and active participation by communities of practice with students exercising leadership themselves; the learning of all the school workforce, not just professional teachers, the preparation of school leaders be they Head Teachers or Principals or other school colleagues exercising specific roles such as Advanced Skills Teachers (AST). With all these diverse activities and initiatives we remain concerned with the what, the how and the why in relation to leadership for learning in schools and the realisation of enhanced student outcomes.

My own Chap. 19 offers a perspective on the UK policy context and how that has changed, especially in the last two decades. It provides a location and background for contextualisation of the themes and issues selected by other authors and attempts to outline the policy imperatives associated with leadership developments and initiatives within the UK and its jurisdictions, devolved over the past two decades. Britain is a very different country now with powers, particularly over education, devolved to the Assemblies and Parliament in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland while the Westminster Parliament continues to oversee policy and legislation in England and retains overall responsibility for non-devolved matters such as UK defence and foreign policy. This has resulted in increased scope for divergence of educational policy within the UK as each of the 'nations' can pursue or emphasise different priorities that perhaps reflect more closely their national and local values such as an emphasis on 'values and citizenship' or 'inclusion and equality'. Various forces on teachers and schools, recognisable in other countries too, have been evident as the 'New Right' inspired modernisation programme of increased accountability and more centralised control has gained momentum through the introduction of teacher standards and accountability and school improvement measures. As a result, the role

of Head Teacher has changed dramatically in the period. The complex and varied demands now made of Head Teachers are encapsulated by Shields (2004: 109):

> Educational leaders are expected to develop learning communities, build the professional capacity of teachers, take advice from parents, engage in collaborative and consultative decision making, resolve conflicts, engage in educative instructional leadership, and attend respectfully, immediately, and appropriately to the needs and requests of families with diverse cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Increasingly, educational leaders are faced with tremendous pressure to demonstrate that every child for whom they are responsible is achieving success.

In England especially, the promotion of the notion of the Head Teacher as CEO, the large salary increases and the resultant 'super hero' approach expected of certain Heads to parachute into 'failing' schools and turn them around all testify to the simplistic belief that the right leader, fully trained and prepared for the task, will automatically result in standards being improved – such a strategy has failed spectacularly in most instances. Devolution provides evidence that in parts of the UK such accountability initiatives had more limited impact and success but concerns about the preparation and support for Head Teachers continues to prevail across Britain. Earley and Weindling (2007) pose an interesting question, suggesting that Head Teachers would benefit from focused continuing professional learning as their needs change, particularly at different stages of their careers. However, concerns about retention and recruitment of Heads has led to an emphasis on the initial preparation programmes and 'licensing' through the National Professional Qualification for Headship available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland or the Scottish Qualification for Headship and a developing alternative mode of achieving the related Standard for Headship in Scotland.

Christine Forde's Chap. 21 considers how the relationship between leadership and learning might be forged in headship/principalship preparation programmes. She discusses three broad models: apprenticeship models or 'learning on the job'; knowledge-based programmes, usually university-based; and experiential learning programmes. Forde explores the strengths and limitations of each of these models and their potential and then uses Scotland, where leadership development has been a significant issue, as a case study drawing on a range of recent research projects. The chapter indicates that even where leadership development programmes exist, there is a great diversity of approaches with a continuing debate about the form that professional learning for educational leaders should take. As Forde notes, leadership preparation in Scotland, while adhering to satisfying an agreed Standard, has a strong focus on a transformational model for school leaders and the raising of pupil achievement; an emphasis is placed on the personal development of leaders and preparation programmes are highly attentive to instructional leadership, or as it is described in Scottish policy documentation, 'leadership for learning'. She observes, however, a clear bias towards programmes and opportunities for personal development aimed at serving and aspirant Head Teachers. Critical questions are posed about the purpose of headship preparation programmes. Should programmes be concerned with the development of the individual leader focusing on interpersonal

skills and abilities to influence or provide vision that others will 'buy into' or with an approach that strengthens an individual's capacity to effect organisational change in a sustained manner? The Scottish Inspectorate remains a powerful influence on policy and practice and Forde suggests, in an appropriately critical fashion, that their recent report, *Leadership for Learning: The challenges of leading in a time of change,* (HMIe 2007) is a key document, placing leadership and learning at the centre of the school agenda.

Other agendas abound in schooling of course, not least that there remains the overarching objective of advancing student achievement and attainment. In Sara Bubb and Peter Earley's Chap. 44, they consider how staff development impacts on learning. They argue strongly that all school staff, teachers and support staff, contribute in different ways to an effective school and that it is therefore important to evaluate staff development and the time apportioned to it. They begin with a discussion of what staff development is, indicating their preference not to use terms such as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) because the use of *professional* may exclude more than half of the school workforce. The authors argue that staff development can make a crucial difference to school improvement where a positive ethos leads to staff feeling more valued and becoming more effective in their roles; the corollary of this is that pupils will learn better, be better behaved and as a result achieve higher standards. Bubb and Earley argue that staff development does not just occur, it needs leadership, management and coordination. Their views are informed by the research they have carried out in schools where the importance of such leadership was affirmed. The need for staff development to be strategic is stressed so that provision meets individual and organisational needs and priorities, many of which will often be dictated by national school policies. Sustainability is a key factor and building capacity and capability viewed as paramount. They argue that the key is to link staff development with school self-evaluation and school improvement plans. They consider the importance of using time for staff development wisely and to evaluate it systematically so that impact can be assessed. They discuss the five levels of professional development evaluation proffered by Guskey (2002) and offer an adaptation that looks at levels of impact and where sources of evidence of impact can be found. For Bubb and Earley, omitting evaluation of impact will result in the continuation of an approach that stresses isolated events and courses with the commensurate failure to create and sustain a genuine learning community within a school.

Professional learning communities and networks is the theme discussed by Mark Hadfield and Chris Chapman. Their Chap. 50 sets out to consider the structures and processes reflected in school-based networks and collaboratives, to seek to know why involvement in such is important and to consider the implications for leadership. They suggest that the 'plasticity' of the term network means that it is applied to diverse forms of collaboration but argue that all networks share certain features. They contend that effective collaborative learning is the product of four key processes viz. leadership, coordination and administration, joint learning and practice development and knowledge and practice transfer. They recognise that these activities will be multi-layered or multi-levelled and the role of leadership is to make the connections, build consensus and identification with the network which will result in

quality and useful participation. Hadfield and Chapman go on to discuss leadership practices critical to successful learning in networks. The need to build into network's activities a loose or tight quality assurance is stressed, thus hopefully avoiding redundancy and frustration building up among those collaborating in the network. They reflect on the literature and their own research that suggests that school networks impact on student achievement and that networks were important for schools dealing with adverse social and educational issues. The evidence suggests that networks are fertile terrain for practitioners to develop innovation and inquiry as forms of professional learning. They conclude their discussion by proposing a framework for network leadership by drawing on their own work relating to networking in challenging circumstances.

Sue Swaffield's Chap. 57 concentrates on the important theme of *Leading Assessment for Learning*. She suggests that the leadership offered by teachers makes most difference to student learning. The chapter provides an overview of the history and purposes associated with *Assessment for Learning* across the jurisdictions that form the new educational landscape of the UK. Citing the influence of the Black and Wiliam (1998) review, which affirmed that formative assessment practices produce substantial student learning gains, as the stimulus for contemporary interest in 'assessment for learning'. Swaffield traces the development of this approach and its influence on overall assessment policy and classroom practice and culture where learning is made explicit, promotes learning autonomy, and focuses on learning rather than performance. While each of the nations within the UK have embraced 'assessment for learning', Swaffield discusses the different approaches adopted, reflecting local cultural, social and political differences. In comparing developments across the four nations she recognises the tension between using assessment for formative and summative purposes experienced in Scotland, the gains of the Welsh approach are endorsed, and notable progress in Northern Ireland recorded. However, she has some critical things to say about progress in England suggesting of policy-makers that 'their leadership of AfL has been at best narrowly focused, at worst a complete distortion'. Critically she confirms the role of school leaders and the key challenge of providing the time and space for teachers to reflect together and share their practice. As a former local authority adviser, she highlights the roles that such personnel can play in addition to the contribution that school students may make themselves. In conclusion she provides details of an emerging 'Leadership for Learning Framework' (Dempster 2009) that stresses that everyone is a learner.

David Frost (Chap. 48) provides an overview of ways in which student leadership can create participative learning cultures, using evidence from two research projects to discuss how schools can enable students of all ages to exercise leadership and to participate fully in the learning enterprise. His initial discussion focuses on student leadership and on the concept of 'distributed' leadership which he describes as 'slippery' perhaps because some researchers view it as a lens or perspective through which to consider how things are done in a school while others view the concept as an active strategy for sharing management tasks, for example. For Frost, the common focus on the 'leader', embodied often in the role of Head Teacher, rather than a focus on leadership, is problematic and he suggests an alternative way of

considering distributed leadership is to focus 'more on the function and practice of leadership than on the roles that are often assumed to facilitate it' and introduces the concept of 'leaderful communities'. High leadership density, it is claimed, is important to an effective school where a shared sense of purpose allows people to feel that they belong. Part of the leading edge research reported involved the identification of a set of principles that encouraged all, including students, who participated to reflect and review their practice. Such principles are posited as a possible tool to enable participants in schools to debate educational aims as they relate to the participation of children and young people in their learning.

Opportunities for student involvement such as consultative forums and offering students' positions of responsibility have been common in schools for some time but the research provided a number of examples of students being involved in reviews and evaluations of provision, including, in certain instances, lesson observation, which Frost admits can be controversial with some audiences. Students are also involved in the forms of tutoring and mentoring. While for some schools such activities would be viewed as novel, the evidence suggests that they are quite widespread, but that student leadership was not explicit. The second project focused more on 'learning to lead'. The Learning to Lead model relies on the designation of a member of staff as the Community Link Teacher (CLT), who coordinates the development of the programme in a school and takes responsibility for training the student teams and maintaining support for them. Important outcomes reported were an increased enjoyment of learning and the development of citizenship and agency. Frost then goes on to discuss the challenges afforded by a "Learning to Lead" pedagogy which inevitably is more student-led and influenced.

The importance of teachers equally being leaders of learning is the focus of Margery McMahon's Chap. 43, providing an account of the emergence of a new professional status and grades for teachers in the UK in recent years, what these entail and the expectations of successful candidates. She considers whether these AST or Chartered Teachers (CT) represent new forms of teacher leadership. McMahon cites a recent policy document (EIS 2008) produced by the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), the dominant teacher union in Scotland, that interestingly suggests CTs have a 'leadership' function outside school management structures. While possibly attractive, this may be problematic and some of the research discussed suggests that there has been a lack of conceptualisation of the roles of ASTs and CTs that would encourage their expertise to be available to other teachers. Much of the research discourse that surrounds CTs links to notions of professional activism, challenge and the promotion of change (or as some would suggest disruptiveness) and indicates at a time of major curricular reform that CTs may become a model for pedagogical leadership. McMahon contends that when considering teacher leadership our understanding might be extended by including new models of accomplished teaching and the potential role for teachers as leaders of learning in schools, with an important role in teacher learning. Such roles she argues need to be supported lest they become relics fitting uncomfortably in our educational systems or as she succinctly describes them – educational curiosities.

I referred to Daniel Muijs' Chap. 9 earlier and it makes an important contribution to thinking about research theory and methodology in this field. He analyses the current dominant types of research in leadership using a random sample of 500 articles drawn from 6 educational leadership journals and identifies a series of weaknesses acting as a brake on further development. From the data, he indicates that the predominant modes of research in the field are case study and survey research methods. Muijs also notes a large number of 'position papers', principally from the UK, that are not based on empirical research or literature reviews but commonly contain statements or even assertions about aspects of leadership. Using the causal models identified by Hallinger (2008), the sample of papers was again examined and the outcome is reported. The weaknesses of educational research on leadership are then considered and the case for researchers and scholars 'to be more explicit about the underlying theories and theories of change of different leadership concepts' is made. With respect to methods he outlines the limitations associated with post hoc studies where, for example, 'interviews are heavily prone to attributional bias'. Muijs does offer hope by positing suggestions for future research; as a school effectiveness researcher, he seeks more longitudinal studies, and an increase in 'quasi-experimental designs, and even of field trials of new leadership methods'. The present economic realities are not over-looked and he makes a plea for combining and integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in a mixed methods approach and suggests more original quality research is required, particularly outside of the USA. His overarching fear is that without such change the field will lose credibility with practitioners, policy-makers and researchers.

'Leadership for Learning' can be conceived as an umbrella term underpinned by the need to create conditions in schools that maximise student development and learning. An issue for formal or positional leaders and managers in some schools is that they remain occupied with the management of learning and teaching and its day-to-day concerns, such as timetabling and maintaining discipline and good order. It is hoped that the chapters from the UK in this Handbook illustrate a series of rich and diverse alternatives and offer possibilities for practitioners, policy-makers and researchers to pursue in relation to assessment, participation and collaborative learning, seeking better pupil outcomes, professional learning, accomplished teaching and leadership in all its manifestations.

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Chapter 7
Leadership and Learning: Making Connections Down Under

Neil Dempster

Introduction

Researchers from Australia and New Zealand are contributing significantly to understanding important issues in the connections between leadership and learning. A number of areas of research have emerged as critical to better informed professional practice and these are addressed by authors from this region of the world. They cover the external demands placed on those leading schools as well as the internal pressures that accompany children, teachers and parents into classrooms. Five of the areas of ongoing research interest addressed are: (1) how the political and policy environments influence school leadership; (2) the nature and extent of the professional preparation and development school leaders experience as they take up and fulfil their roles; (3) the way in which leadership is shared and how those in positional authority are working with teachers to this end; (4) strategies for the inclusion of parents and members of the wider community as leaders of children's learning, especially the learning of the disadvantaged and marginalised; and (5) the leadership roles of students. Finally, emerging research which is focused on documenting the effects of combinations of leadership actions taken systematically by school principals to improve children's learning in Australasia is explained. To conclude, I outline other necessary research in each of the five areas addressed in the chapter.

Educational Policy Environments Down Under

It goes without saying that Australia and New Zealand are different. They are both sovereign nations with similar forms of government but with distinctly different ways of administering their schools. Australia is a federation operating under a

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Commonwealth Constitution which shares legislative responsibility for nominated matters between six States and two Territories. For example, matters such as Defence and Trade are Federal Government responsibilities while Education and Health are matters for State and Territory jurisdictions. New Zealand has a single national parliament and legislature with direct responsibility for all aspects of public administration. These features of the governments of both countries are reflected in their political agendas for education as well as in the policy settings established for schools and their leadership.

In their work, Thomas and Watson (2010) from Australia and Wylie (2010) from New Zealand show that, like most contemporary western democracies, New Zealand and Australia see education as a key instrument of the state. This position has firmed over the last 50 years with a good deal of shuffling between individual and state interests. In both countries, education is now linked closely with national productivity and economic performance. It is seen by politicians as the means by which skilled and knowledgeable people are outfitted for competition in global markets. A competition ethic pervades this neo-liberal managerialist ideology and so it is no surprise that competition is being keenly felt in Australian and New Zealand schools. Lifting school performance through competition underpins the politics of education. However, it is only in the application of education policies that differences between the two countries become apparent; these differences are in degree rather than in kind. Both countries pursue efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, demanding these through the use of strategies such as standardised testing of students, the definition of professional standards for teachers and leaders, programs to raise literacy and numeracy achievement, a drive to compare the performance of schools and to monitor and report that performance publicly, support for private providers to enter the education market and acknowledgement of parents as 'consumers' of education with the capacity to choose what they buy. When coupled with a national curriculum, these elements combine, figuratively at least, to enable the state to walk through the school gate beside each child. In so doing, a very real tension also enters the school ground.

Teachers know that learning occurs best when a child's needs, interests and abilities are the starting point. They also know that improvement in achievement occurs only as a result of the teaching and learning experiences a child encounters. Yet, the competition ethic places a heavy emphasis on comparative performance with other children, collectively with other schools, and in recent years with other nations. The Personal Best (PB) of the individual child seems to matter less to politicians than the performance of the country as a whole. And yet we know too, that one's personal best is what really matters to a child. Cathy Wylie voices concerns emerging in New Zealand where there has not yet been an emphasis on national standardised testing. However, a newly elected government has injected a measure of uncertainty into this matter by insisting on the implementation of national standards for student achievement. Issues in implementation are soon to be encountered, and the fear is that Kiwi teachers will be facing the same tensions and test anxiety as their counterparts across the Tasman Sea.

While New Zealand takes its national system of education for granted, Australia is moving quite rapidly towards greater national consistency in education by placing

critical elements of policy in the Australian Government's hands. This does not necessarily mean that national consistency will be achieved, a point made emphatically by Thomas and Watson. State and Territory Governments have to agree at meetings of a peak government body – the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Nevertheless, a national educational agenda is proceeding with the development and implementation of a National Curriculum, a National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for all children in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9, the establishment of an Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to develop and monitor these national initiatives, including the publication of comparative school data on all Australian schools through an open web site called *MySchool*. This initiative makes the national monitoring of Australian schools possible, something New Zealand schools have accommodated for more than two decades though with a much softer 'landing' than is evident in Australia. There, an Education Review Office (ERO) is charged with assessing schools, reporting their achievement against a broad performance inventory and making the reports public. However, there is no national school by school performance reporting strategy such as *Myschool*, at least, not yet.

The tensions felt by principals as they manage the public disclosure of their schools' performance can lead to a reduction in the attention schools give to the broad range of young people's learning needs. What is likely is that more attention will be given to matters which are tested. Clarke and Wildy (2010) acknowledge in their work, as do Dempster et al. (2010) in theirs, that the emphasis on principals' compliance with legal and regulatory demands over the last two decades, has drawn the attention of school leaders away from curriculum, teaching and learning. The irony in the use of a strategy to improve student achievement, such as a national test, is that this strategy may well narrow children's learning experiences and ultimately their achievements.

The idea of standards as a means to improve achievement is being used as a strategy to improve school leadership in Australia. Standards for school leaders are being developed by another new agency in Australian education – the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Thomas and Watson (2010) show how the profession itself is being bypassed in the process as the government seeks views about quality leadership from employers rather than the profession. This mirrors Wylie's concern in New Zealand over a lack of consultation in the production of student achievement standards. The issue at the heart of this is the lack of trust governments in both countries seem to have for the teaching profession. Competition, control, compliance and surveillance appear to be the mechanisms factored into policy and practice. Taken together, these policy realities in Australia and New Zealand will hold principals to account for student attainment and the overall performance of their schools. Many hope that the instrumental pursuit of educational accountability does not smother attempts to support school leaders in pursuing leadership for learning. In this respect, the conclusion reached by Thomas and Watson mirrors that of Wylie. They all have fears that the dominance of accountability compliance will override the development of leadership which provides a rich learning experience for the young.

Having examined the policy context influencing school leadership in Australia and New Zealand, I turn now to discuss the directions in which, as researchers show, leadership development is headed in both countries.

Principals' Leadership Development

The issue of consistency in the quality of school leadership has surfaced in New Zealand and Australia simultaneously, putting leadership expectations, development and sustainability under the spotlight. In New Zealand, as Wylie (2010) argues, because school principals are appointed by local Boards of Trustees using idiosyncratic criteria, it has been difficult to achieve consistent approaches to recruitment and professional development across the nation. In Australia, the fractious nature of federal, state and territory relations over the years has produced as many approaches to school leadership development as there are jurisdictions. Although the motivations for action are different, both countries seem intent on nationally consistent approaches to the principalship. However, Wylie advocates a developmental approach to principals' professional learning as do Clarke and Wildy. Neither endorses national leadership standards as the best starting point.

Wylie describes a proposed New Zealand framework focused on leadership capability development. The framework is clearly influenced by the School Leadership Best Evidence Synthesis, an extensive meta-analytical study into the actions of school leaders which directly and indirectly affect student learning and achievement (Robinson et al. 2009). The synthesis is so comprehensive that the leadership dimensions and attributes it has validated provide a strong focus for professional development (see Wylie's chapter for a description of the framework in detail). Indeed, the shared approach to leadership which it encourages allows principals to use the framework in reviewing how well or otherwise they have extended leadership to others in the school. What is most evident in the framework is its concentration on linking leadership with student learning. Indeed, a concentration on improving learning and student achievement is held as the central moral purpose for school leaders. Understanding much more about leadership capabilities through targeted research based on the framework is essential to identifying professional learning needs for individual school leaders as well as school leadership teams. Wylie shows that initial work on this problem has begun in New Zealand in the hope that a definitive picture of leadership capabilities in action will help inform evidence-based, nationally consistent approaches to professional development.

In Australia, Clarke and Wildy (2010) draw attention to the *Melbourne Declaration of Goals for Australian Schools* as a backdrop against which leadership for learning should be framed. This Declaration sets out a broad agenda for Australian education, encompassing not only literacy and numeracy but also information and communication technology, the sciences, the arts, civic engagement and health and well-being. Its intention is to foster curriculum breadth and the wide pedagogical scope necessary to match teaching to individual learning styles, talents and capacities.

The focus in the Declaration is on helping children and young people to reach their personal potential and to make positive contributions to society as able citizens. The task of those responsible for the professional development of school principals is to engage them directly in this broad agenda for learning as their highest priority. Gaining knowledge about how to handle the multiple accountability demands of a competitive policy environment, while essential for principals' development, should not overshadow their concentration on students' learning.

Given that there are more than a dozen capabilities and standards statements for school leaders available in Australian state and territory systems, Clarke and Wildy offer an alternative for principals, as individuals, to think about and to construct a balanced approach to their professional learning. They invite principals to make use of an heuristic *tool* to guide their planning and participation in personal professional learning. The heuristic is derived from fundamental leadership concepts ensuring that the critical matter of understanding the context of leadership is given attention; that the learning of leaders includes the theory and practice of sharing leadership with others; that being able to carry out system requirements makes system focused learning necessary; and understanding that self-reliance and resilience are based on personal values and well being and practices to support them. The heuristic uses four markers to focus learning: *place, people, system and self*. Clarke and Wildy argue that if principals are to be powerful leaders of learning, they need to be powerful learners themselves. The application of the heuristic each year and across a career will help ensure that leaders give their own learning a significant emphasis. In so doing, they will be able to counter the fact that most professional learning for principals at present is run by employers, drawing leadership development towards system needs as a first priority. While this is understandable, it produces a flow-on effect on the personal learning needs of principals. No matter what those needs are, they are likely to take a back seat in the face of system pressures.

Researchers in both countries would concede that the professional learning of school leaders is in need of much more research before claims about the impact of particular approaches can be validated with empirical evidence. That said, there is a clear research platform being constructed to inform ongoing work in New Zealand, as Wylie has shown. This is a more complex matter in Australia where the federal system is likely to see more attention given to state-based research on state leadership development needs than to national interests informed by national leadership standards. No matter the competition between Commonwealth and State approaches, both are sure to receive greater prominence than the personal learning needs of principals.

Teacher Leadership

It is well known that the three most significant factors in accounting for variations in children's learning are the background and entry characteristics of the children themselves, the quality of the leadership in their schools and the quality of their

teachers. Of these three, it is the first which is most important. Parent, family, peer and community interest in education is the basis from which schools derive critical support for formal learning. When principals and teachers are sensitive to family, community and young people's aspirations and are able to connect with them, they are better placed to reach out and engage their young charges in positive ways. Making a difference once pupils are inside the school gate, then rests to a large extent, on the quality of the learning experiences teachers are able to develop and implement.

Being concerned with the quality of teaching, with the expansion of professional repertoires, and with the sharing of effective practice to maintain or improve what they do with children, are hallmarks of teacher leadership and indicators of professionalism at work. While a concentration on the accountabilities of positional leadership is understandable from the point of view of employers, what distinguishes effective leadership at the school level is the extent to which it is shared amongst those who work directly with children; hence, the perennial interest in the topic of teacher leadership.

As Lovett and Andrews (2010) point out in their work, getting teachers to believe that they are leaders involves developing their knowledge and skills and having positional leaders placing trust in their professional capacity to implement productive initiatives in their classrooms in partnership with their colleagues. Such is the power of quality teaching in making a difference to children's learning and achievement that positional leaders should see teacher leadership as one of their highest priorities. Indeed research findings (Leithwood et al. 2006; Spillane 2006; Frost 2008; Harris 2009) underscore the importance of this claim.

In both Australia and New Zealand, there is an increasing research evidence and a growing literature on teacher leadership (Lovett and Andrews 2010). At least two types are reported from recent findings: (1) teacher leadership encouraged by collectives engaged in shared discourse about classroom practices that work, and the conditions for learning which support them; and (2) teacher leadership encouraged by those in positional authority as a means of sharing important responsibilities for and commitment to school improvement. The former approach has been described as 'peer leadership' while the latter is described by Crowther et al (2002) and Andrews and Crowther (2006) as 'parallel leadership'. Both types of teacher leadership are essential in modern schools if connections between leadership and learning are to produce the effects the research evidence shows they can (Leithwood et al. 2006).

Case studies in New Zealand and Australia (Lovett and Andrews 2010) provide substantial qualitative data on the efficacy of both classroom and school focused teacher leadership. At the heart of both, Lovett and Andrews have concluded, lie conditions which must be met before teachers can take on the responsibilities and accountabilities which shared leadership demands. First, sharing relies on collaborative work, whether that work is intended to contribute to changes in an individual classroom or across the school as a whole. Second, collaborative work occurs best in professional communities where adult learning is valued and where intentions are agreed. Third, in professional learning communities, conversations amongst teachers

are about discussing, in a disciplined way, evidence about the conditions for learning and the achievement of individuals. In other words, it is the moral imperative to improve the lives of children through learning that motivates teacher leaders to shared action. Lovett and Andrews (2010) put it this way: teacher leadership will only thrive when the need for it is recognised by positional leaders who, with their teachers, have a commitment to distributive leadership, collaborative cultures and disciplined professional conversations.

In Australia and New Zealand, it is yet another irony that the policy environment permeating schooling is becoming increasingly competitive and contested rather than cooperative and consensual. The effects of a competitive educational environment have not yet reached as deeply into the profession in Australia and New Zealand as they have elsewhere, for example in the USA and in the UK. A 'Letter Report' by the National Academy of the Sciences in the United States (2009) into high stakes testing for example, points strongly to many of its perverse effects. Amongst these is the effect on collaborative activity, clearly seen when teachers who want to keep their pedagogical practices well away from the 'prying eyes' of others act selfishly to protect their perceived competitive position. Perverse effects such as this (see http//www.appa.asn.au – Media Reaction 15 June, 2010) have begun to be seen in Australia, in isolated cases, since the implementation of the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). While competition is not so evident within schools, it is clearly becoming evident across schools, where rank in the order of merit is being used as a marketing device by schools at the top of the test performance ladder. This outcome should not be unanticipated in New Zealand if the policy environment there continues on its present competitive trajectory. The upshot will be a diminution in one key 'ingredient' for effective teacher leadership, collaborative cultures within and between schools. With its devolved system of school governance and management, the ill effects of competition on schooling are more likely to bite deeply in New Zealand where schools are managed autonomously than in Australia where public school systems are managed centrally. However, in Australia, intersectoral collaborative endeavour to foster teacher leadership by sharing best practice across public and private schooling is likely to suffer, and as a result, teacher leadership is likely to suffer too.

Leadership in Disadvantaged School Communities

What is contemporary research in Australia and New Zealand telling us about leadership in and for disadvantaged school communities? And why is this question so important in both nations? To answer the second question first is to acknowledge that in the face of neo-liberalist leaning governments in Australia and New Zealand, both countries maintain strong policy commitments to equity and social justice (Thomas and Watson 2010; Wylie 2010; Bishop 2010). While this may at first appear strange, given that neo-liberalism, at worst, can be charged with Social Darwinist

intent, it is not unusual in these two antipodean democracies. Both share the idea of a 'fair go for all' and this has been expressed in equity and social justice policies and programs progressively. Notwithstanding this common commitment, New Zealand would be regarded by most Australians as well ahead in what has been achieved with disadvantaged peoples, particularly indigenous peoples. Bishop's findings (2010) tell us in no uncertain terms though that the Australian perception is *not* New Zealand reality. There, where Maori and Pacifika people constitute a large proportion of the overall population, their continuing over-representation in the nation's negative statistics about health, employment and crime is still a major concern. Why this is so and what can be done about it constantly exercise the minds of politicians and policy-makers in Aotearoa, New Zealand. After all, a generation of research findings (MacBeath et al. 2007; Bradley et al. 2007) has reinforced the knowledge that students from well-documented 'at risk' groups in society are not well served by their formal education and are thus heavily disadvantaged in later life.

In Australia, Johnson and Jervis-Tracey (2010) bring this issue into the fore-ground by exposing the 'doxa', or taken for granted assumptions, of disadvantage. They argue that dealing with disparities requires a shift in the thinking and action of marginalised groups. Bishop (2010) likewise argues that systematic attention must be paid to minority groups, large and small, if disparities in health, education, employment, political representation and general well being are to be improved and sustained. He has found in his New Zealand research that this requires scaling up the strategies used in intervention efforts that have been shown to produce efficacious outcomes. And the most effective interventions are planned and implemented with multiple layers of action and support at classroom, school and policy levels. Getting a start on this is, in part, a responsibility of schools in partnership with their local parents and communities. Johnson and Jervis-Tracey (2010) argue that these partnerships must be composed in such a way that parents are empowered to see themselves as effective contributing leaders of their children's learning. This is no easy task as the pervasive nature of social disadvantage in both countries shows. Inequity continues despite the affirmative funding that has been directed to programs and projects designed to overcome it. This is Bishop's central concern as it is for Johnson and Jervis-Tracey. While Bishop's evidence points to the benefits of enlarging good local projects into system wide practice, always with a concern to make improvements sustainable, Johnson and Jervis-Tracey take a much more micro-level view. They suggest that the assumptions of disadvantage need to be confronted head on, in the life stories of disaffected individuals. This is a novel research approach, not necessarily attractive to governments, but certainly able to contribute new knowledge to an age old problem.

To sum up, from both sides of the Tasman, different research routes into equity solutions are offered – large scale, structural and system changing in New Zealand, small scale, personalised and life changing in Australia. Both approaches are necessary if understandings about disadvantage are to be enhanced and solutions based on these understandings are to be implemented whenever and wherever disparities occur.

Student Leadership

In studies of leadership in Australia and New Zealand, the young are noticeably absent (Dempster and Lizzio 2007; Gunter and Fitzgerald 2007) and yet, students make up one of the sides of the parent, teacher, student triangle always bound together in learning. However, there is emerging research into student and youth leadership in Australia underscoring some interesting connections between leadership and learning. Lizzio et al. (2010, forthcoming) draw together a number of findings to show that with young people, particularly adolescents, a unifying theme may be that 'relationships matter more than institutions'. If their view is valid, then how well children and young people are treated by their families, teachers and peers is a fundamental influence on how well they become connected to their schools. Furthermore, there is a support for the proposition that experience of reasonable empowerment and a climate of participatory social engagement (both factors influencing leadership) are known to develop in students the very social, emotional and cognitive attributes that facilitate improvements in academic achievement. Indeed, social participation and responsibility are interwoven with the development of three well-cited academic enablers (Elliott 2003), *motivation*, *interpersonal skills* and *learning skills*. Therefore, active encouragement of shared student leadership carries significant potential benefits for young people themselves and for schools in general. That said, leadership is not an *a priori* condition found automatically in students at school, just waiting to be activated. Lizzio et al. (2010, forthcoming) have shown that it is the immediacy of the sense of connection and belonging they experience with their teachers and their peers that governs the sense of identification students have with their schools. Only then is engagement in all aspects of learning, curricular and co-curricular, enhanced, and once this occurs, the desire to take on leadership responsibilities in matters of school citizenship is elevated. Without supportive relationships with peers and teachers, leadership activity is not likely to be widespread amongst students, particularly adolescents at school.

Skinner et al. (2010) point out that there is limited research into student leadership, and what there is fails to focus on the voice of the young. Indeed researchers on both sides of the Tasman lament the lack of attention given to gathering data on the way young people see their worlds (Gunter and Fitzgerald 2007). They call on adult researchers to honour young people's views, to take the sense of the world they see into explanations of the links between learning and leadership and new approaches to leadership in the classroom and in the wider community. At the end of the day, they argue that this will provide clear benefits for society at large because levels of civic responsibility (such as active school citizenship) displayed during adolescence consistently predict levels of civic responsibility in adulthood (Reinders and Younis 2006). Lastly, new youth-centric knowledge offers the possibility for the development of new approaches to youth leadership for the classroom curriculum and beyond.

Emerging Research Agendas

In the final part of this chapter, I examine research in Australia and New Zealand over the last few years which has begun to address combinations of actions by school leaders – actions which have been shown to make a difference, directly or indirectly, to students' learning and achievement. These leadership actions, such as a concentration on teacher professional development or the matching of curriculum resources to high priority learning needs, have been shown to be influential in improving aspects of student learning and achievement. Combining these actions in systematic ways as leadership frameworks is now occurring. However, as yet, there has been little research into their effects. This new research space is being entered in Australia and New Zealand by scholars such as Robinson (2007), Robinson and Timperley (2007), Masters (2009), Wiley (2010), and Dempster et al. (2010).

Interest in understanding the effects of systematic leadership work clearly related to learning has arisen partly as Thomas and Watson (2010) have pointed out because of a reaction to the heavy emphasis placed on efficient school management by successive governments in both countries for over two decades. Getting back to the central moral purpose of school leadership, that is, to contribute to the improvement of children's and young people's lives through learning, is replacing efficient management, financial or otherwise, as the raison d'etre for principalship. With this as a backdrop, Robinson and others, in New Zealand led a change in research focus in this part of the world, with their meta-analytical study of verifiable effects of particular leadership actions. Robinson's work has been seminal, resulting in the compilation of five dimensions in a leadership framework which outlines the critical areas in which principals must be active if they are to have an impact on students' learning and achievement. Examples of these have been referred to above and are explained by Wylie (2010) in Chap. 37. Other work has followed such as that explained by Dempster (2009) in a Leadership for Learning Blue Print. In summary form, these new leadership frameworks spell out with different emphases, the importance of the following:

- Making student learning central to the principal's role;
- Ensuring that he or she is actively engaging in professional development with teachers;
- Using sound evidence or data about the performance and experiences of students to improve teaching and learning;
- Being directly involved in curriculum coordination and the direct monitoring of quality teaching, student learning and performance;
- Harnessing partnerships for learning beyond the school with parents and members of the community;
- Attending consciously to the physical, social and emotional conditions for learning, including the alignment of available resources to support key learning priorities;
- Sharing leadership with teachers, parents and students; and
- Working with the school towards a shared vision with agreed values and expectations.

Taking action on all of the above on a continuing basis, it is claimed, is likely to significantly increase the impact of the work of school leaders on student learning and achievement. This claim when turned into a question to motivate research, asks: *What are the effects of the work of principals who systematically apply particular leadership for learning frameworks in the leadership of their schools*? The types of studies necessary to answer this question are only just being planned and implemented (see Wylie 2010; Dempster et al. 2010) but when they are completed and the results are in, much more will be known about the distinctive work of principals and their contribution to the central moral purpose of education.

Conclusion

This discussion of some of the links between leadership and learning from the perspective of Australian and New Zealand researchers has opened up fertile ground for further research on the matters addressed in this chapter. It has also implied the need to wrestle with present policies and professional leadership practice.

First, we need to know more about the overall effects of a competitive educational policy environment on schools, students and their families. Policy-makers and practitioners should be able to see the benefits or otherwise of powerful policies on those with whom they work because without this knowledge, productive change in practice is likely to be based on hearsay and happenstance rather than on rationally debated robust evidence.

Second, we need to study the professional learning of principals so as to ascertain whether a system controlled standards framework or a personally managed heuristic, such as that explained by Clarke and Wildy (2010), produces outcomes over time that better enable school leaders to sustain leadership efforts focused on learning.

Third, understanding how teacher leadership is best facilitated and how it might be recognised and rewarded in schools with high staff mobility is a growing concern, particularly in disadvantaged communities. Learning more about the effects of teacher-led professional learning communities on student achievement will provide policy-makers and practitioners with a basis from which to develop valid strategies which share leadership more broadly in schools.

Fourth, taking the findings from successful projects designed to improve school experiences and learning achievements of disadvantaged groups, and implementing 'scaled up' versions is a must for policy-makers. Doing so, however, should be accompanied by large scale research to document effects, particularly those that are long-lasting and self-sustaining. Without work such as this, new leverage on intractable problems will not come into play.

Fifth, research is required into how leadership might be shared more broadly and deeply with a school's student body. Taking this seriously will help refine our understanding of the perspectives young people bring to situations in which leadership is required, for academic, non-academic and school citizenship purposes.

Listening to students' voices and hearing what they say will better inform school leaders and teachers about student leadership development and the benefits that accompany it.

Finally, there is no doubt that the corpus of knowledge about the links between leadership and learning is growing in Australia and New Zealand as the discussion in this chapter has shown. How that research knowledge is blended and then applied in new ways will, to a large extent, rest on the relationships amongst researchers, policy-makers and practitioners as they come together in search of their common obligation – leading to achieve improvement in the lives of students through learning.

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Chapter 8
Leadership for Learning in the Middle East: The Road Travelled Thus Far

Thuwayba Al-Barwani

Sufficient evidence indicates that careful and sustained attention to the quality of instruction and the conditions of learning can make a difference to students learning. Studies on learning have begun to uncover some institutional conditions that are conducive to higher quality of instruction and better learning (Resnick and Gleman 2002). The concern to improve learning and to create leadership for learning within schools and school systems has been heightened by unsatisfactory standards achieved by students and the collective realization that schools have run short of achieving their most important goal – that of student learning. To this end, the past decade has witnessed the emergence of a number of propositions and theoretical developments that aim at identifying the characteristics that will enable schools to become learning organizations and the qualities desired of leaders of such organizations (Johnson 1998).

Literature has shown that leadership for learning has the potential to ensure that the culture of learning is created within the school and support is provided to ensure that instructional goals are achieved and learning is actually taking place in the school and the classroom. The concept is built on an argument that asserts that student learning cannot take place in isolation. Rather, it needs to be nurtured in an environment where all players are involved in an ongoing learning process which creates a community of learners that supports professional development of teachers, administrators, supervisory staff and other stakeholders. An important facet of leadership for learning is its emphasis on the quality of learning and constant improvement through research, development and innovation. According to Resnick and Gleman (2002), schools cannot achieve this on their own. Organized support for a new form of educational leadership is required, together with a substantial redesign of school systems along with more powerful external support mechanisms to help schools in this process.

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The need to improve learning has been recognized by the MENA countries for several decades now. In fact, an analysis of government budgets of the MENA region for the last four decades has shown that the region has invested almost 5% of the GDP and 20% of government budgets on education. In fact in recent years, the proportion of GDP spent by MENA governments exceeded those of East Asia and Latin America by about 1.5% points. Similarly, MENA countries have spent more per student at all levels of education than comparable countries. Undoubtedly, this has resulted in tremendous progress being made toward the provision of free education for all. However, the World Bank's flagship report *The Road not Travelled*: *Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa*, of 2008, points out that despite the improvements, the region continues to face a number of challenges:

- MENA countries have produced fewer educational outcomes than many competitors, as measured by years of educational attainment in the adult population
- Relatively low scores on international tests
- Literacy rates are low
- Systems produce more graduates in humanities than in the sciences
- Unemployment is high among graduates
- The region is not yet fully equipped to produce graduates with skills and expertise necessary to compete in a world where knowledge is essential for making progress

No doubt the MENA region has come a long way since the publication of UNDP's controversial 'First Arab Human Development Report' of 2002. However, results of the national and international assessments of students' learning, along with other performance indicators such as the rates of school wastage (grade repetition and drop out), have consistently shown that despite the money invested and political will to improve standards, MENA countries continue to fall behind in all these measures. This disturbing underperformance of students is seen in all countries of the region. For example, poor performance was shown on international evaluations such as TIMSS which revealed that six out of the ten bottom countries that took the test in 2007 are from MENA (IEA 2009; UNESCO 2007). Similar results are seen in PISA and MLA tests.

In attempting to solve the problem of unsatisfactory student performance, countries of the region instituted large-scale reforms aimed at improving student learning. This mobilization around the quality of learning might well be the new road on which the MENA countries have decided to travel. The questions addressed in this chapter are: How far have we come? How bumpy is the road ahead of us? And what can be done to ensure that we arrive at our target destination?

To answer these questions, the chapter will analyse four case studies from the region namely Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Oman. These studies looked at different aspects of national education systems in relation to the theoretical and pedagogical requirements for achieving leadership for learning. As a whole the chapters take a critical look at school climate, quality assurance and the quality culture, teacher qualifications and professional development, school administration and the innovation and reform process of both the curricula and instructional approaches. All four

chapters presented from the region have confirmed that different reform initiatives are taking place but they also lament the disconnection between these reforms and learning which is the overarching purpose of such reforms.

Need for Leadership for Learning

Leadership for learning is a concept that is rather new to the region. According to the World Bank Report of 2007, 'Most MENA countries adopted a command-and-control education management structure to establish, expand and maintain schools…' (p. 282). Thus, until recently, leadership was always associated with central control, school administration, supervision and classroom management. This is in keeping with the region's long history of traditional education systems which focused mainly on indoctrination and efficient knowledge transfer to the learner. Learning on the other hand was assumed to automatically happen to the learner once teaching has taken place. For a long time it was the teacher-centred philosophy that was dominant in our schools. It is not surprising therefore, that it is only now that education systems have begun to experiment with learner-centred methodologies and to pay increasing attention to learning.

While concern for student learning is becoming part of the education jargon frequently used in regional education gatherings and mentioned in education reports, it is not clear whether learning is actually understood in its totality. The connection between teacher and administrator learning and student learning is still not clearly defined. Similarly, there still seems to be a mismatch between the learning environment created within the school and the actual learning that is supposed to occur. Nevertheless, a random visitor may notice that there are signs of honest attempts at reform that may chart the future road that the region needs to take. This road will not only have learning as its ultimate destination but will also pay attention to the journey itself, where the process, the context and quality of learning are a priority.

How Far Have We Come?

To understand how far the region has come on its journey, careful analysis was done on the four case studies presented from the region. The four studies covering Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Oman approached leadership for learning from different angles thus showing the complexity and multidimensionality of its construct. The four chapters cover a number of common elements that seem to best describe the region's efforts on this regard. These are as follows:

- The MENA region has embarked on large-scale reforms and large portions of national budgets have been invested to make this happen.

- Intensified efforts and money are invested in the professional development of teachers and administrative staff.
- Pre-service preparation of teachers is becoming more selective, rigorous and responsive to market needs and trends.
- Reforms and innovations that have taken place so far have not delivered the anticipated student outcomes but have nevertheless improved curricula, teacher dispositions, community engagement and school infrastructure.
- Quest for quality, performance and improved standards are among the important priorities on the education agenda yet the cultures for quality and accountability remain elusive.
- Despite the effort at decentralization, education systems in the MENA region remain essentially centralized where most reform initiatives and policy decisions are taken at the central level and are then channelled down to the schools for implementation.
- Due to the high demand for professional development of an ever growing community of teachers, most MENA countries have resorted to ICT in the form of portals, distance learning modules and community-based initiatives. These initiatives, however, are in the early stages and require policies and infrastructure to support efficient implementation.

Using the Egyptian context, Zidan analyses the challenges and opportunities of creating a learning culture in Egyptian schools. He contends that changing the culture of the school is a prerequisite for any internal and external change in the quality of education. He agrees with Stephens (2003) who argues that any meaningful improvement in student learning must first come from within the school itself. In his analysis of the readiness of the Egyptian school for change, Zidan asserts that many teachers and to a lesser degree administrators want to see change in educational policy and classroom practice. He affirms that the climate and present culture of the Egyptian school are changing to become more conducive to better teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education's recent initiatives of raising teacher qualifications, increasing teacher salaries, expansion in teacher training programs in conjunction with internationally funded education reform projects and the establishment of the national quality assurance and accreditation agency have all contributed to create the right context for change. Zidan reports that, funding agencies have attested to the changing Egyptian environment by what they have seen during school visits. They noted significant improvement in numerous areas such as:

- High levels of commitment among teachers and administrators.
- Teachers are open and willing to try new things and do things differently.
- Teachers, parents and communities are working together to improve educational quality and the environment of the school.
- Students are excited about learning as never seen before.

All of this is driven by the concern, interest and motivation to make a big shift from the conventional teacher-dominant environment to one that promotes learning for all.

In the case of Morocco, Ezzaki analyses the concept 'leadership for learning' in relation to its numerous facets – the public facet, the policy facet, the teacher education facet, the teacher supervision facet, the pedagogical facet, the school management facet and the instructional facet. He argues that the Moroccan experience with leadership for learning can only be understood within the framework of this multi-faceted perspective.

In his chapter Ezzaki discusses how each one of these facets has contributed to the development of leadership for learning in Morocco. Until recently, the major players in the public facet were international organizations and funding agencies that have drawn attention to the inefficiencies of the system. However, with the recent establishment of the High Education Council, the role of overseer was shifted to this council. Composed of high profile members of the society, the Council has played a leading role in shaping the direction of school reform and monitoring performance. As a result of its critical reports, the Council became famous for its role as the principal institutional leader providing checks and balances and direction for systemic change.

Under the policy facet, Ezzaki discusses the role of the reform makers as strategic leaders for learning. He explains that education reform was initiated in 2008 with the main goal of combating the challenges facing the education system. Of the 28 projects initiated, nine of them were concerned directly with improving student learning while others focussed on the professional development of teachers and administrators.

The teacher education facet is seen to facilitate the creation of future frontline educational leaders. The supervisory facet is seen by Ezzaki to play a critical, multiple learning related leadership role, where supervisors are considered to be both gatekeepers of school pedagogy and at the same time, collaborators in seeking solutions to institutional problems.

In the last few years of implementing school reform in Morocco, the role of the school management team was seen to be crucial. The school management facet recognized that the performance of a school is largely dependent on the school principal and their involvement in student learning. Thus, school principals became increasingly accountable and responsible for creating conditions that are conducive to student learning. To enable them to improve their performance, principals were engaged in training programs focussing on student learning.

The instructional facet has constituted the most important framework that prepares teachers as frontline learning leaders. Recognizing this role, the Ministry of Education instituted strong pre-service programs and professional development training that would enhance their leadership roles.

In his chapter on Jordan, Tarawneh looks at leadership for quality as an essential prerequisite for leadership for learning. His chapter traces the establishment of quality assurance agencies in the Arab region and discusses the processes of assessment of quality, the development of an understanding of quality and the obstacles encountered in implementing quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms.

Improvement in quality of education seems to have been identified as a regional priority following the Beirut Declaration of 1998 which called for, among other

things, the introduction of new teaching and learning skills, the inclusion of new technologies and the promotion of scientific and analytical thinking skills.

Consequently, the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education was established in 2004 to support government effort to improve standards. Following this was the establishment of national accreditation agencies and quality assurance mechanisms in almost every country in the region.

Specifically the chapter focuses on Jordan's mushrooming higher education institutions and concern regarding the quality of programs offered by these institutions. To guarantee minimum standards of quality, legislation was promulgated in 1998 to establish the Accreditation Council under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. In the initial stage, the council focused on private universities only. However, as enrolments in public universities increased and exceeded capacity levels, issues of quality became prominent. In 2007, the Accreditation Council was dissolved and a Higher Education Accreditation Commission was established in 2009 as a financially and administratively independent entity. The commission's main objectives were to establish and guarantee quality in higher education, to encourage universities to be open to and interact with international scientific research institutions and accreditation commissions and to upgrade standards in keeping with internationally recognized criteria. The establishment of such a commission is considered to be an important step towards creating a culture of quality and excellence in education at all levels of education.

Al Barwani and Osman discuss leadership for learning in the context of education innovations and reform. Taking Oman as a case study, the chapter analyses innovative projects that were implemented in Oman for the purpose of improving student learning. The Innovation Sustainability Wheel is used as a tool to identify the missing links that may impact the sustainability of the innovations studied, thus identifying the reasons behind the failure to achieve the intended goals.

In keeping with the 'Vision for Oman's Economy – Oman: 2020', the Ministry of Education took serious steps to ensure that students will be adequately prepared to enter higher education, the labour market and serve their society as responsible citizens. To this effect, the Ministry embarked on large-scale reforms and innovations that would transform education from its traditional character to a modern system that responds to demands of the knowledge economy and international standards of performance.

Over a decade into the reforms and while new ideas, pedagogies and innovations continue to be implemented and substantial funds are allocated, concern is being raised over the impact of such innovations on school performance. Available evidence seems to indicate that despite the investment and more focus on the learner, student performance remains to a large extent, unsatisfactory.

The questions addressed in this chapter deal with the relationship between innovations endorsed by government and the actual relationship between these innovations and student learning. Another issue addressed is the sustainability of these innovations and the extent to which the investment and effort put into innovations and reforms actually produce visible outcomes that can be connected to actual student and teacher improvement.

Al Barwani and Osman focus on four specific innovations that were presumed to improve student learning: The Basic Education Reform, The Child Centred Classroom Methodology, The National Career Guidance Centre and the Educational Portal. Using the 12 components (or driving forces) of the Sustainability Wheel as criteria, the authors analyse each innovation against these driving forces.

Results of the analysis have shown that many of the driving forces that constitute ISW can be identified as salient features of the four innovations. The most prominent features that appeared in all the four innovations are: centrally initiated and monitored, high level of commitment by initiators, clearly defined vision and goals (at least for three of four innovations), adequate resource mobilization, training and professional development of teachers and staff and contribution of international organizations in the form of consultancies. The chapter also highlights a number of loopholes that may point to the reason behind the problem of sustainability of these innovations.

In summary, to answer the question 'How far have we come?' one can decipher from this analysis that the MENA region is on the right path and that it has come a long way since the World Bank report of 2007. It is also clear that the road is not smooth and that there are a number of obstacles that need to be eliminated.

How Bumpy Is the Road?

All four chapters identify obstacles, challenges and shortcomings that inhibit our schools from achieving their goals of becoming learning organizations. Zidan, for example, points to the conditions needed to ensure that Egyptian schools create a culture of learning that will ensure both student learning and the development of leadership for such learning to occur. He identifies five main conditions that he deems to be necessary for successful creation of a school culture that promotes a sense of pride and ownership among all involved and has high likelihood of creating a built-in, driving force that will create and sustain school excellence.

Zidan asserts that in order to create a positive school culture for learning in Egypt, the following conditions need to be ensured:

- Capable leadership and administration that can create a healthy school climate, enhance school improvement and build a culture of trust and mutual respect.
- Empowered teachers who enhance their students' abilities to learn as a result of their own exposure to new pedagogies through ongoing professional development.
- Self-regulated autonomous learners who are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Authentic meaningful learning that equips the learner with effective tools for dealing with real life challenges and opportunities.
- Effective, open communication that creates a safe, secure and friendly work environment that is conducive to quality learning and that enhances team work and collaboration which are essential for achieving collective goals of enhancing a positive culture of school improvement.

Ezzaki points to a set of unfavourable factors that he considers to be responsible for undermining the government's efforts to achieve leadership for learning in Moroccan schools. He describes these factors as follows:

- The standardization of teaching that has produced teachers efficient at implementing the set guidelines and instructions put forth by regional and central offices, but has unfortunately taken away creativity, a sense of ownership and the empowerment of teachers which are important elements in leadership for learning.
- The pressure of student assessments and results which tends to force teachers to focus on achievement rather than learning.
- Increasing and conflicting demands on teachers which disperse teachers' focus and direct their attention to secondary issues that may not necessarily enhance student learning.
- Unfavourable work and living conditions that significantly limit the teachers' efforts for achieving effective student learning.
- Inadequate teacher education and pre-service supervision undertaken by faculty with extremely diverse profiles, both academically and socio-economically. The two-tier preparation of teachers has resulted in divergence of career interests, lack of a common vision about the profession and conflict in the way the actual work of teacher education is to be conducted.

Tarawneh on the other hand, discusses the obstacles that have been identified by the study conducted by the Arab Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (ANQAAHE) in 2009. The study surveyed 16 quality assurance agencies in the Arab region and a number of challenges were identified. Some of these obstacles are summarized in the following points:

- Absence of a culture of quality that makes it difficult to implement change.
- Quality assurance organizations are established by government thus creating a problem of autonomy and empowerment.
- Insufficient funds are allocated for efficient implementation of quality mechanisms and processes.
- Most quality assurance agencies in the region are in the infancy stage and require models of best practice.
- Lack of legislation that enforces standards, benchmarks and accreditation.
- Unavailability of external organizations that could validate the quality of education in the region.
- Quality assurance should not be limited to higher education but should be initiated in schools as well.

Al Barwani and Osman also identify a number of obstacles that they consider to be critical in the creation of an environment that promotes learning. Among them are:

- Lack of a sense of ownership, accountability and empowerment among teachers and other implementers which tends to prevent them from becoming fully involved in the reform process.
- Most reforms are initiated by the top administration which limits the teacher's role to that of an uninvolved implementer.

- Lack of adequate and continuous training of all players and stakeholders. Oftentimes training would involve teachers only thus bypassing administrative staff and supervisors.
- Absence of a clear connection between innovations and student learning outcomes.
- Lack of a clear definition of the relationship between one innovation to another.
- Lack of integration of the innovation into the existing system or infrastructure.
- Lack of incentives or a reward system for teachers and other implementers.
- Absence of a culture of change.
- Inadequate attention to research and development.

The Road Ahead

If we take our destination to be the creation of a learning organization as it is defined by Senge (1990), as being one 'where people continuously expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, where people are continually learning to see the whole together' (p. 3), and the preparation of visioning, empowered and learning leaders to lead such a learning organization, the region will need to pay extra attention to a number of factors without which leadership for learning and learning organizations would become a mere mirage.

It appears from the analysis of the four case studies from the region that there are a number of key factors that need to be taken into consideration. While it is clear from the analysis that the traditional face of education is undergoing dramatic change, and that attempts are being made at developing teacher capacity, improving the curricula and the learning environment as well as focusing on standards and learner competencies, it seems that these changes are not preceded by policies and practices that establish a culture of learning in our schools. Moreover, the changes that have taken place so far have been channeled down from the top as independent initiatives that do not necessarily make a cohesive whole. There is need therefore for the efforts to converge at a common goal – that of achieving learning.

The empowerment of teachers and school administrators to embrace change is a challenge to the reform process in the region. While much is being done to arm teachers with the skills and competencies required, ownership of the project remains in the hands of significant others.

It is often hard to ensure that teachers and school administrators who have been trained on certain pedagogical approaches will actually continue to implement the new ideas once the innovation has been institutionalized. Oftentimes change does not occur because teachers tend to revert to their old ways of doing things mainly because they cannot see or understand the whole picture.

The quality of learning is another important aspect of this equation because leadership for learning is about quality in both the goal and the process. To attain

learning at its highest level, the actions undertaken must reflect a search for excellence. This search for excellence can only be ensured when the school environment is conducive to learning. This would entail creating an environment that provides intellectual leadership for both teachers and students and one that nurtures creativity, that promotes a system of incentives for taking initiatives, and encourages innovative ideas, accountability and distinction in job performance.

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Vision for Oman's National Economy: Oman 2020.

Part II
Theoretical and Contextual Frameworks for Leadership for Learning

Chapter 9
Researching Leadership: Towards a New Paradigm

Daniel Muijs

Introduction

The area of educational leadership is one that has seen a strong development over recent decades, certainly in terms of the number of studies and their prominence in the educational arena, and in that sense we can say that the field has rapidly developed. However, for a field to reach its maximum impact in terms of contributing to both research and practise, it is essential that methodologies and theories developed are suitable to the questions asked, and are sufficiently sophisticated to study an acknowledgedly complex area.

In this chapter I will use an analysis of recently published papers to explore what the dominant types of research in leadership currently are, and to look at the underlying causal models and theories of action underpinning the methods and studies, in particular the direct and indirect effect models that underlie most quantitative studies, and many qualitative studies as well. An empirical study of recent articles in the field will be used for this purpose.

For us to develop the field, it is important to acknowledge that notwithstanding the successes achieved, there are also major weaknesses which are currently holding back the further development of leadership research. These will form the topic of the next two sections.

In section three I will review typical research instruments used, and highlight the issue of self-response as the main way of collecting data on leadership. This introduces severe risks to reliability and validity in these studies. In the final section I will suggest some ways in which we can develop our methodological and theoretical frameworks to ensure that the field continues to grow in import and quality as well as in quantity of outputs.

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What Kind of Research Methods Do We Currently Use?

A first question we need to ask ourselves in the field of leadership research is what methods we are currently employing, and whether these are in fact the most appropriate ones. In order to look at the question of what research methods are most commonly employed, a random sample of 500 articles from 6 educational leadership journals was selected (*School Leadership and Management*; *Educational Management, Leadership and Administration*; *Journal of Educational Administration*; *Educational Administration Quarterly*; *International Studies in Education Administration and International Journal of Educational Management*), all published between January 2005 and March 2010. These were then classified by research method(s) used. Fifty-four articles were found not to be relevant (the content not relating to educational leadership) and were omitted from the analyses. Results can be found in Table 9.1.

From the above it is clear that the predominant modes of research in the field are case study and survey research methods. There was no significant change in the proportion of these types of research over time. US journals contained a greater proportion of survey research than UK and international journals. The reverse was true of case study research. A notable finding is the large number of what I have called "position papers". These are articles that are neither based on empirical research nor systematic literature reviews, but contain position statements on factors such as ethical leadership or introduce new leadership concepts. A lot of these take the form of "tips for leaders". This type of article is more common in the UK journals. Other types of research are infrequent. Particularly surprising is the dearth of mixed-methods studies, a methodology that has become increasingly popular in educational research more generally. Most mixed-methods studies published combined survey with case study research.

Case study research, the most common form of research in our sample, typically employs a multiple case design. However, it is notable that most case studies comprise a relatively limited number of case visits, with case study visits often no more than one-off two-day visits (or in some cases even 1-day visits). This is not likely to lead to the in-depth understanding one would hope to gain from a case study.

Table 9.1 Research methodologies in recently published papers

Research method	Percentage of articles
Case study research	37.6
Survey research	23.8
Position papers	16.5
Mixed methods	4.5
Interviews	4.1
Action research	3.0
Literature review	2.4
Narrative methods	1.8
Secondary data analysis	1.7
Quasi-experimental	0.9

Within the case studies, interviews and the collection of documentary evidence are the most common data collection methods.

Survey studies are typically cross-sectional, with fewer than 10% being longitudinal in nature. A range of different measures and instruments are used, and most studies use self-constructed questionnaires, leading to a lack of comparability.

What Conceptual Effect Models Underlie These Studies?

Leadership research obviously has a variety of different goals. Some studies aim to illuminate personality characteristics, lives and experiences of leaders. Others focus on (lack of) diversity in leadership, or provide a detailed description of leadership behaviours or values. However, in many cases an underlying causal mechanism underlies views of leadership impact. As an educational effectiveness researcher, it is my opinion that educational leadership would not be worth studying if it did not impact on organisational effectiveness and, ultimately, student outcomes.

A particularly useful way of classifying models of educational leadership (see Fig. 9.1) in this sense is provided by Hallinger (2008, p. 17).

He identifies four main types of causal models that underlie studies of educational leadership, the Direct Effects model, the Direct Effects with Antecedents' model, the Mediated Effects model, the Mediated Effects with Antecedents model and Reciprocal Effects model.

Hallinger (2008) claims that empirical data increasingly support the reciprocal effects model, in which educational outcomes and school environment are equally strong determinants of principal leadership behaviours as are principal leadership behaviours themselves determinants of educational outcomes. In other words, the leader does not simply shape the organisational culture and environment leading to enhanced outcomes, as is often assumed. Rather, the leader her/himself is influenced and shaped by the environment s/he finds herself in a view obviously supported by earlier contingency theories (Fiedler 1967). Hallinger (2008) reviewed doctoral dissertations using the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale, and found that reciprocal and mediated models were rarely used, with the majority of studies employing direct effects models, notwithstanding their clear theoretical shortcomings.

We again looked at our sample of papers to ascertain which causal model underlay their designs. Interestingly, the majority of papers that do not focus explicitly on causal links with educational outcomes nevertheless implicitly posit causal mechanisms, for example by suggesting that forms of leadership or coaching will lead to organisational transformation. In total, just 17.7% of papers did not in any way address causal mechanisms, and were therefore excluded from the analyses. Results are given in Table 9.2.

As can be seen in Table 9.2 the majority of papers posit direct effects or direct effects/antecedents models, with just under 30% positing mediated effects models and just under 16% reciprocal models.

Model A1: Direct Effects

Model A2: Direct Effects with Antecedents
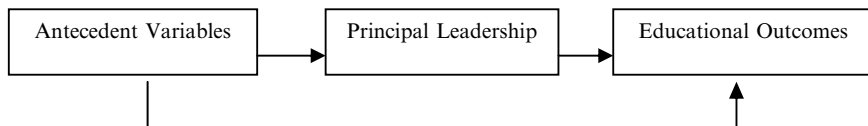
Model B1: Mediated Effects
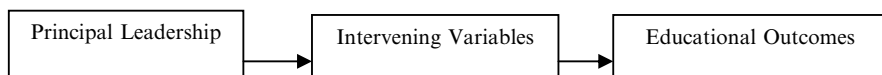
Model B2: Mediated Effects with Antecedent Effects
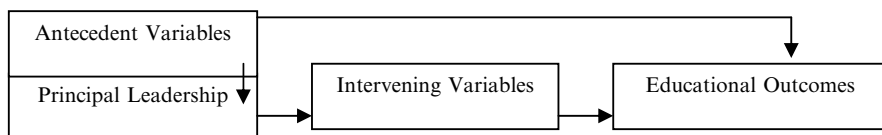
Model C: Reciprocal Effects
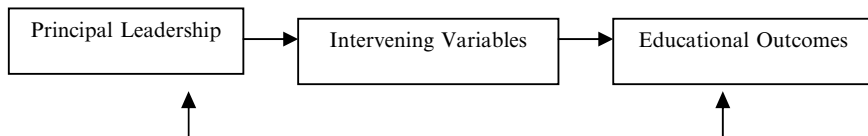
Fig. 9.1 Models of causality

Table 9.2 Underlying models

Model	Percentage of papers
A1	41.2
A2	13.7
B1	25.5
B2	3.9
C	15.7

As can be seen in Table 9.3 there are some differences according to the type of research. Qualitative studies present the most diverse picture, with substantial representation of each model in the studies. A1 studies typically take the form of case studies of headteachers "transforming" the school, and tend to rely largely on

Table 9.3 Underlying models by study type

Model	Percentage of qualitative studies	Percentage of quantitative studies	Percentage of position papers
A1	32.1	34.4	46.1
A2	18.2	2.1	14.4
B1	25.0	49.5	34.6
B2	7.0	4.9	2.8
C	17.7	9.1	2.1

headteacher self-report. In some cases biographical and school prior characteristics are included in these studies (A2). School cultures and context are frequently used as mediating factors. In the more sophisticated designs the role of school culture, pupil attitudes and community are seen as factors that shape leadership activities.

The most common type of quantitative studies employ a mediated model. Leadership characteristics (such as distributed leadership) are hypothesised to affect outcomes through mediators (e.g. teacher behaviours). There are still also a large number of direct effect studies, and notwithstanding the weaknesses of this design it is not uncommon to see leadership characteristics directly correlated with pupil outcomes. Some longitudinal studies have measured reciprocal effects as in Hallinger's (2008) model C.

Interestingly, the most frequent use of direct effects models are found in position papers. This is due to their often ideological or evangelical stance, where the proposed model/values/practices are invariably supposed to lead to enhanced outcomes of some sort or other (e.g. greater equity). There are few C-type papers in this category.

Weaknesses of Extant Research

Lack of Clear Theories

First, it is clear that researchers and scholars within the field of educational leadership need to be more explicit about the underlying theories and theories of change of different leadership concepts. In the studies reviewed above only a minority explicitly stated their underlying causal model or theory of change. Doing this will help inform practitioners of whether a particular form of leadership practice is suitable for the goals they are pursuing. It will also clarify the extent to which it is even theoretically likely that the concept will be useful in changing leadership practices and lead to desired outcomes and effects in schools. While there have been clear advances in this area, for example, through the work of Hallinger and Heck (1998) and Day and Leithwood (2007), there is still too often a tendency to coin new phrases and the so-called types of leadership rather than trying to clearly define and measure current leadership concepts.

As is clear from our discussion above, the causal mechanisms underlying leadership effects are often undertheorised and overly simplistic. Where causal mechanisms are posited they need to take into account at the very least mediated, and preferably reciprocal, models.

Prescriptivity

There is a tendency, not just in leadership, but in educational research more generally, to jump rapidly from a limited research base to prescriptions for practice, as a result of pressures from governments and their agencies in search of "quick fixes" and from schools in search of solutions to the need for fast improvement as a result of the accountability measures they are forced to work under. Commercial consultants and advocates of particular programmes or movements are often ready to offer such solutions, but academic authors do this too. Hence, they hold their share of responsibility for this situation.

In my analyses above one striking factor was the high number of position papers that essentially argued for various new conceptions of leadership with scant empirical base. The number of untested models and prescriptions in the field appears extensive. This is helpful neither to practitioners nor to the development of the field of leadership studies.

Dualism

This tendency is exacerbated by the over reliance on dualistic models in the field, which invite prescription through their identification of one set of practices as "good" and another set as "bad". There is widespread use of oppositional models that pit factors against one another, such as performativity and democracy, or distributed and hierarchical leadership. This was very evident in the studies reviewed. This is of course not a tendency that is unique to research in the leadership field. Educational research generally suffers from this, as is evidenced in distinctions between "deep" and "surface" learning in higher education pedagogy (Biggs 2003), distinctions between "progressive" and "traditional" methods of teaching, and of course the distinction between "good" and "bad" schools (Reynolds et al. 2004). Moreover, it is clearly absurd to set up a duality in which management is distinct from and inferior to leadership. Management functions are integral to the running of organisations, and are in practice hard to separate from leadership. Indeed, some researchers have correctly pointed out that much of what is now termed leadership was in the past termed management, or before that, administration (Gunter 2001). It is clear that if we are to move the field on we will have to go beyond this tendency to set up a dualism, pick one part as being "good" and then recommend this as the way forward for practice. Classification is a necessity for science to progress, but a more refined understanding of contextual and situational leadership and management may be

more illuminating and less prone to simplistic prescriptions. Methodologically this requires both theoretical models that focus more strongly on the *level of presence* of different characteristics rather than the presence or absence. Recent models in school effectiveness are attempting to do this, and present a promising approach that can inform leadership studies (Creemers and Kyriakides 2007). Methodologically, the use of more precise measurement instruments that allow the construction of continuous scales (i.e. the Rasch model) can move us beyond factor approaches which lend themselves to the production of oppositional models.

Change Metaphors

As well as a strong reliance of dualism, there is an overreliance on change metaphors in research on educational leadership. This was particularly evident in the case studies reported on above, where the aim frequently was to highlight "transformations" wrought by the headteacher in her/his school. This again results in part from the stress on leadership at the expense of management, where leadership is seen as concerned with change and transformation, while management is about maintenance functions in an organisation. The view that leadership is the key to school improvement therefore leads to a pre-occupation among authors in the field and among leaders themselves with change. Of course, managing change, and, where necessary, instigating change are important, and in the increasingly unstable and fast moving environment in which schools operate is probably more so than ever (Fullan 2001). However, the emphasis on change, both in the literature (e.g. Kotter 2000) and in the development programmes for headteachers, has led to a situation where every new head feels s/he has to make changes whether they are necessary or not, purely to demonstrate leadership.

In our own research we have seen many instances of highly successful schools suffering where new leadership made wide ranging changes to effective schools for reasons that did not stand up to scrutiny and that could in the end be described simply as a desire to change. Educational policy making seems similarly afflicted, with a rapid turnover of policies and initiatives seen as necessary to demonstrate this warped view of leadership. Again, we end up with the problematic nature of dualistic views of leadership. Therefore, greater emphasis on some of the maintenance aspects of leadership and management would be welcome, and as mentioned above, effectiveness models are helpful here.

Weaknesses in Research Methods

That the research base is not as strong as one might expect reflects not just a dearth of research compared to prescription, but also deficiencies in research methods. There is a strong overreliance of self-report in leadership studies, where the most common form of research design is either a survey or case studies based largely on

interview data, usually of a limited number of school leaders. Studies are almost always post hoc, trying to work backwards with a retrospective view on the research object. This practice is clearly limited. Both survey- and interview-based methodologies, while highly useful, have, when used as the sole means of data collection, some severe limitations. Post hoc interviews are heavily prone to attributional bias (the tendency to attribute to ourselves positive outcomes, while negative outcomes are externally attributed, Weiner 1980), as well as to self-presentation bias and interviewer expectancy effects (the tendency to give those answers we feel the interviewer wants to hear). Where leaders have received leadership development, there is an increasing tendency to hear the theories learnt on leadership courses repeated in interview situations. This is particularly the case where mandatory assessed leadership training exists and is focussed on leadership models, such as is the case in England. Survey questionnaires are likewise limited, especially where they are cross-sectional, as only correlational data can be collected. The issues of expectancy effects and bias exist here as well, as does attributional bias. In one survey study, for example, respondents tended to describe themselves as transformational leaders, while their line managers were described as using transactional leadership styles (Muijs et al. 2006).

Some Suggestions for Future Research

These limitations mean it is often hard to make strong statements either about impact, or about processes. Therefore I would like to make some suggestions for reform in leadership research.

First, the quantitative methodologies used need more often to be longitudinal, and to make more use of quasi-experimental designs, and even of field trials of new leadership methods.

It would also seem sensible to conduct less studies of leadership as a standalone factor, and more studies where leadership is integrated within a model of school effectiveness, which is theorised and takes into account the ways in which leadership interacts with other key school factors. School effectiveness studies and models such as the Dynamic Model of School Effectiveness (Creemers and Kyriakides 2007) seem to be an obvious home for such studies.

Moreover, there is the need to gather data not only from the school leaders but also from the teachers and others (to add additional views from an external perception to the self-reports from a self-perception). Additionally, observations, although cost-intensive and not easy to implement, as they most often intervene with the day-to-day practice which should be observed, might help to move us to multi-perspectivity and triangulation.

Qualitative approaches likewise need to be more multi-perspective and longitudinal. They need to employ methods and instruments that allow more in-depth interrogation of processes such as ethnographic studies and genuine long-term case studies as well as the methods currently used.

Obviously, feasibility is also restricting research and therefore the research designs should have the appropriate funding. In a climate of fiscal austerity it may be necessary to concentrate research funding into a small(er) number of large-scale studies which allow cooperative research arrangements to develop more sophisticated multi-perspective and longitudinal designs rather than an array of small-scale studies as is now frequently the case. It would then be desirable for researchers to forge links with schools and districts to conduct smaller scale action research or quasi-experimental studies with partner schools.

Interestingly, even if some discussion has been started about combining quantitative and qualitative methods, integrating them in a mixed-methods research design, few studies in leadership research (but also in educational research in general) are trying to integrate these ideas into their research designs. As is evident in Table 9.1, only a small minority of studies published in the field use mixed-methods approaches. This is unfortunate in view of the possibilities for both breadth and depth in well-designed mixed-methods studies, and it is an area that requires further development, though here again well-funded, large-scale collaborative studies may be necessary. It is also interesting to see how alternative data gathering methods might illuminate the complexity of organisation and leadership context, as for example Huber (2008) uses Social Network Analysis, Life Curve Analysis, such as pictures and metaphors. Besides data gathering methods, there is also a need for more refined methods of data analysis, such as multi-level, growth models and structural equation modelling which are becoming ever more popular in social scientific research more generally.

More original research in the field needs to be undertaken, in particular outside of North America, as the over reliance on findings from studies conducted in the USA needs to be alleviated. Leadership, like other factors in education, is contextual (that is, structurally and culturally specific), and it is therefore not valid to expect findings to apply unproblematically across countries and even continents. There are obvious contextual differences in terms of leadership relating to the extent of autonomy school leaders have within the educational system, their appointment and selection criteria, while less immediately obvious cultural differences make it even less likely that one could simply import findings from one context to the other without at least some adaptation. This means that the tendency to move straight to prescription becomes potentially even more harmful where the research base is from an entirely different (cultural) context, where school leadership will operate under different circumstances and conditions.

A key issue in improving leadership research is a focus on better measurement of constructs. Currently, many educational research measures suffer from up to 50% measurement error, which both lowers reliability and sets a low upper boundary for measurement of effects in the field. This better measurement needs to start with clearer conceptualisation and agreed concepts. In areas such as psychology there is a greater emphasis on and willingness to clearly define concepts (such as, for example self-concept or personality), and to work to agreed definitions. Better measurement also means developing instruments using appropriate measurement theories and methods, such as Rasch analysis. As Fox (2004) has demonstrated,

use of these methods can increase both accuracy and lead to a greater emphasis on school factors in statistical models. Finally, once reliable measures have been constructed, these need to be more widely used. As there is a tendency for each researcher to redefine concepts, so there is a tendency to develop new measures and scales for each individual study rather than to use existing instruments. Doing the latter would allow us to cumulatively build and develop our knowledge. That this can be successfully done in the social sciences is demonstrated by research in the area of self-concept, which has made great strides over the past 30 years through the use of agreed models and measures (see, e.g. Marsh et al. 2008).

Reviews of the existing evidence, of which there are many, suffer from some of the limitations of the field, in that they often have a limited conception of causality and privilege prescription over evidence. A more systematic literature review approach including the use of meta-analytic studies may be necessary to further provide a strong generalisable basis for future study and development of the field.

Therefore, while leadership research has made important contributions to the field of education which have had practical benefits, if we are genuinely to move both research and practice on we need to do more rigorous quantitative and qualitative research. This should be aimed at both measuring impact and exploring processes, taking into account the complexity of schools as organisations, and refraining from an overly prescriptive approach that, on the basis of very limited research, posits absolute truths about good practice. If we continue the practice of coming up with a never ending stream of poorly researched ideas, sooner or later research in this field is likely to lose credibility in the eyes of both practitioners and researchers, losing the possible benefits of genuinely improving what remains one of the key factors in educational effectiveness.

Last but not least we need to create better "fits" of theories, empirical research and experienced practice. Hence, besides all methodological and methodical questions and desired modified research practice, there is also a need to refine theoretical models and theories (whether with a very focused or with a broader approach). Empirical research should lead to further developed theories and theoretical assumptions should guide our empirical work.

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Chapter 10
A Multifaceted Perspective on Leadership for Learning: A Case Study on Moroccan Education

Abdelkader Ezzaki

Introduction: The Need for Learning-Oriented Leadership

In Morocco, as it is the case in many other MENA countries, the need for 'leadership for learning' is much stronger now than it has ever been before. The education system consumes over 20% of the nation's annual budget and continues to engage various reforms,[1] yet the sector is currently characterized by an alarming level of underperformance. Among the important indicators of this description are the results of Moroccan school students on international evaluations, especially TIMSS and PIRLS.[2] On the 2003 TIMSS results, the fourth-grade Moroccan students scored no more than 347 in mathematics (compared with the international average of 495) and 304 in science (compared with the international average of 489). On the eighth-grade test, the Moroccan students scored no more than 387 in mathematics (compared with the international average of 467) and 396 in science (compared with the international average of 474). On the reading literacy assessment conducted during the 2006 PIRLS, the Moroccan fourth-grade students scored 323 against the international mean of 500 and about 74% of this student population is reported to lack the skills considered required by PIRLS.[3]

These disappointing results were recently confirmed by the national evaluation conducted in 2008 by the High Educational Council[4] – the Moroccan supreme authority over the education sector. This evaluation, which covered the fourth-, sixth-, eighth- and

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[1] See, for example, Ezzaki (2007).

[2] IEA (2009). The same results are reported in: 'Conseil supérieur de l'enseignement' (2008).

[3] Conseil supérieur de l'enseignement' (2008).

[4] The official name is: 'Le Conseil supérieur de l'enseignement'. The evaluation undertaken by this council is known under the name of PNEA or 'Programme National de l'évaluation des acquis'. The full report.of this evaluation is in: Conseil supérieur de l'enseignement (2008).

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ninth-grade levels, reported that students of all these levels scored below the average of 50% in all the main subjects, namely Arabic, French, mathematics and science (including physics and chemistry for the middle school grade levels).

It is true that this perturbing underperformance is not limited to Morocco; instead, it is applicable, albeit to varying degrees, to the whole MENA region, for all the countries in this part of the world have performed poorly on the IEA international evaluations. For example, on the 2007 TIMSS fourth-grade evaluation, six out of the ten bottom countries are from MENA in both mathematics and science. In eighth-grade evaluation, 8 out of the 10 bottom countries for mathematics and 10 out of 20 for science are from this same region. In both mathematics and science in fourth- and eighth-grades, all of the MENA countries scored below the mean of 500. However, despite this regional trend, it remains true that Morocco's underperformance is most alarming, especially in view of the long history and richness of its educational tradition and the requirements for its national development ambitions.

The results of the national and international evaluations of students' learning, along with other performance indicators such as the rates of school wastage (grade repetition and dropping out), are a source of major concern for the educational authorities. In the face of these problems, the system has initiated a large-scale reform in which the educational leaders are being mobilized not only to intensify their efforts in their usual tasks, but also direct their attention particularly towards the quality of learning. This mobilization around the quality of learning is the essence of what may be termed 'leadership for learning'.

Understanding the Concept of Leadership for Learning

'Leadership for learning' is understood here as provoking or inspiring positive change and taking responsibility for the mobilization of educators around a common goal, a system-wide vision of the needed improvements that can take the form of small- or large-scale reform. This responsibility covers not only the design of the change, but also its implementation procedures which include communication, training and the follow-up activities.

Leadership for learning is also understood here as the set of programs and actions that lead the way to improved student achievement and place quality learning at the centre of the education agenda. Quality is viewed here not only in its *internal* dimension, that is, the performance of the school system on the critical indicators such as students' academic achievement in exams and tests, student retention, grade promotion, completion and gender equity, but also in its *external* dimension, that is, the concern with the practical usefulness of the academic learning as it relates to the real world – the so-called educational relevance. On this basis, the leaders for learning are those who are concerned in their work with one or both dimensions.

An important characteristic of leadership for learning is the element of innovation, based on the taking of initiatives by individuals or groups and directed to the

improvement of students' learning. There can be no true leadership if it does not involve personal or group effort for positive change.

Within a wider view, leadership for learning also covers the initiatives that promote professional development. In this sense, the focus is not on the students, but on the educators themselves as a professional community of learners.

Finally, leadership for learning is not the monopoly of any particular group or individual; instead, it is the shared characteristic of several stakeholders. As such, it has several dimensions or facets that comprise public life, policymaking, pedagogical design, teacher education, teacher supervision, school management, educators' professional development, etc. All these facets may involve the concern with quality learning, innovation, initiative, modelling of behaviour, or the development of community learning. It is this view of leadership for learning that guides the present case study.

The Public Facet: The Social Critics and Specialized Organizations as Leaders in Providing Reform Foundations

Like any social change, educational reform is usually empowered not only by specialists in the field, but also by the community of social critics represented by journalists, writers, politicians, civil society activists and parents. Organized into structured entities (e.g. associations) or acting on their own, the members of this community have, over the years, played an important role in bringing to the attention of the public and the official authorities the inadequacies of the entire educational system, including its pedagogical practices. Through more or less specialized publications, a number of social critics have risen to the level of leaders by contributing to change in Moroccan education and by enriching the local culture about teaching and learning. These contributions are further strengthened by educational material that is published in the press either in the form of occasional articles or as whole specialized weekly pages in certain daily newspapers. This press material is generally authored by non-specialist writers who engage in critiquing the Ministry's policies and common school practices and therefore offer an opportunity for a 'democratic' educational leadership.

Usually, the social critics draw their support and substantial material from another type of leadership which is that of the international specialized agencies, including the World Bank, the UNDP and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The periodic reports that these institutions have issued in the last few years have been an important source of diagnostic information and direction for reform. Examples of these reports include the 2007 MENA Education Flagship Report of the World Bank.[5] Although the

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[5] The World Bank (2007).

major dysfunctions of the education system have been known to the public for a long time, it usually is not until they are highlighted by these agencies that they become truly critical facts for the media and eventually for policymakers. Among these dysfunctions are the degraded quality of students' learning, teacher absenteeism, lack of public accountability and high rates of school wastage. In some ways, these international agencies are 'distant leaders' of educational change, especially in view of the country's political openness and the attention it gives to its international image.

Aware of the need to have its own national education authority, Morocco has recently instituted the High Educational Council.[6] Composed of eminent national leaders, this institution has undertaken several high-profile activities and published well-respected reports that are sometimes very critical of the education system's performance. In so doing, it has 'stolen the show' from the international agencies and has become a respectable reference even for the harshest social critics. With its national status and widely respected work, this council has lately become not only the 'watchdog' of the system, but also the prime 'institutional leader' in shaping new education policies, the provider of the main foundations for the ministry's current reform.

The Policy Facet: The Reform Makers as the Strategic Learning Leaders

Because of the critical challenges facing the education system, the Government of Morocco – through its Ministry of Education – has engaged, since September 2008, a wide-ranging reform known as the 'Emergency Program'.[7] This reform constitutes an urgent implementation of the less operational 'National Charter on Education and Training' issued and approved at the turn of the century.[8] The program consists of 27 projects many of which are concerned directly with students' learning. The following are some of these projects:

- *Promoting and democratizing preschool education* (Project E1 P1): This project is intended to bridge the gap between the home and school learning, especially for underprivileged rural children for whom schooling is a difficult experience, given the wide cultural and linguistic gap between family socialization and formal education. The initiative comprises not only instituting pre-schooling as an integral part of the school system, but also creating 3,600 preschool classes within the public primary schools and setting up 100 exemplary preschool programs across the country. The aim of all these measures is to introduce children

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[6] See footnote 4.

[7] Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur, de la formation des cadres et de la recherche scientifique (2008).

[8] Royaume du Maroc (1999).

to the 'language of literacy' and to enrich their background knowledge with new life experiences, which facilitates students' subsequent learning and helps avoid the educational deficit that underprivileged children often accumulate over the years and that eventually leads to school failure.

- *Combating school wastage* (Project E1 P5): This project is intended to address the critical wastage problem that is clearly reflected in the high rates of grade repetition and dropping out, especially among rural children and among females. Measures to achieve this goal include procedures for close student monitoring and putting into place a system of remedial classes (3–4 h per week), with the purpose of improving students' learning and ensuring higher achievement results.

- *Improving the curriculum* (E1 P8): This project aims essentially at: (1) completing the institutionalization of the Competency-Based Approach (CBA), (2) linking innovation and educational research with the real needs of the system and (3) improving the teaching of science and technology. The concrete measures for the project include experimenting and eventually implementing the so-called Integration Pedagogy,[9] putting into place a clearly defined strategy for relevant educational innovation and practical pedagogical research, emphasizing hands-on approach to science learning and promoting excellence in science.

- *Integrating ICT and innovation in students' learning* (Project E1 P10): The implementation of this project comprises not only equipping schools with the necessary hardware, but also the training of teachers and the development of digital learning materials.

- *Improving 'school life'* (Project E1 P12): In addition to strengthening the management of schools, this project seeks to institute officially established clubs and resources for extra-curricular activities that ensure more diversity and enrichment in students' learning.

- *Promoting excellence* (E2 P2): This project seeks to provide for the needs of talented learners at all levels and to set up in all regions excellence-oriented high schools that constitute a reference for overall performance by staff and students alike and, in some selected cases, prepare highly competitive post-secondary students for top higher education institutions in Morocco and overseas (the so-called classes préparatoires).[10]

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[9] 'Integration Pedagogy' is a set of teaching procedures designed to support the implementation of the Competency-Based Approach. The principle of this pedagogy is to include, in the school instructional time, moments in which the newly taught contents are integrated in meaningful real-life situations. For a review on this pedagogy, see, for example: Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur, de la formation des cadres et de la recherché scientifique – Département de l'enseignement scolaire (2009c) or Roegiers (2003).

[10] The 'classes préparatoires', which belong to the French educational tradition, are special classes that are housed within reputable senior high schools and intended for top-achievers in the baccalaureate (high school exams), especially in math and science subjects. They provide a highly demanding 2-year post-secondary program that prepares students for exams of admission in selective higher education institutions which are typically schools of engineering or business.

- *Strengthening the skills of educational personnel* (E3 P1): The objective in this project is to totally reengineer the pre-service teacher education scheme in such a way as to make the system more unified (less diversified), ensure better student recruitment and strengthen the practical training of teachers. It is also intended to make the in-service training more flexible and more responsive to the real needs of schools.
- *Strengthening the mechanisms of inspection and teacher supervision* (E3 P2): This project is concerned with the improvement of school inspectors' skills and procedures for teacher supervision.
- *Improving the teaching of languages* (E3 P6): The measures under this initiative aim at strengthening the teaching of both the students' mother tongue[11] and foreign languages, so as to improve the students' communicative skills and enhance their learning of the various content subjects.

The above are 9 out of the 27 projects that make up the Emergency Program. They are the ones that are most closely connected with leadership for learning. Some deal specifically with the student learning, such as those on preschool education, curriculum improvement and ICT integration, while others are more related to the 'making' of educational leaders, such those on teacher training and the improvement of supervision.

The leadership of the policymakers in undertaking the current reform is characterized by action on different fronts. Among other things, these leaders have responded to the varied problems of the system and have laid out a comprehensive and multidimensional reform. They have also assumed the difficult tasks of communicating these projects to the public, enriching them with feedback from the stakeholders, determining their implementation strategies and procedures, working out the task distribution among the different institutions or individuals and, most importantly, securing generous funding needed for the implementation of the reform – a rare happening in Moroccan public life. To support all these tasks, the policymakers are mobilizing the entire education community around the program and are keeping the focus on its objectives. For example, the only 'official discourse' among educators in these days is that of the 'Emergency Program' and no effort or budget allocation or international aid project can currently be justified without reference to this program. With this general mobilization, implementation is being sought not only in a top-down manner as was the case in previous reforms, but also through bottom-up procedures, that is, fleshing out the reform with inputs from the provincial authorities and local schools.

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[11]Following the extensive political reforms, TAMAZIGHT (the language of the original populations of Morocco – Amazigh) is being given more recognition in the wider cultural and educational contexts. Arabic is no longer considered by some as the only mother tongue for Moroccan children.

Unfortunately, these leadership roles are meeting with some significant challenges. These include, for example: (1) the difficult negotiations between the Ministry and the teachers' unions which have so far not endorsed the 'Emergency Program' and are not supporting it, (2) the shortage of able reform implementers as a result of the government-initiated early retirement of several hundred educators, (3) the largely inefficient administrative and financial procedures at the different levels of the sector's management and (4) the weaknesses of follow-up, accountability and incentives. These difficulties are bound to weaken the efforts of the policymakers in ensuring the success of the reform.

The Teacher Education Facet: Facilitating the Creation of Future Frontline Educational Leaders

As is the case everywhere, teacher educators hold a very important learning leadership role in that they prepare classroom instructors in initial or in-service training programs. In Morocco, they are affiliated with one of three different types of institutions, each of which is directed to a given cycle: primary, preparatory and high school. They draw their legitimacy for leadership from different sources: teaching experience and seniority (mostly in the case of the trainers for the primary school) or from their academic credentials and educational specialization (mostly in the case of the trainers for the middle- and high-school).

In addition to belonging to the same profession, teacher educators have the common responsibility for providing educational leadership by helping their trainees go beyond the current reality found in the schools, question the current pedagogical practices, introduce innovations in these practices and conduct research on relevant issues. Their leadership is highly institutionalized and widely recognized. For example, much to the dislike of field school inspectors, teacher educators play a major role in recruiting student-teachers, and their work carries significant weight, since the certification that they award to the trainees upon graduation translates into tenure in the teaching profession.

Despite the important leadership roles that it provides, teacher education in Morocco is fraught with persistent problems that largely undermine full functioning and steady career development. Important among these are the institutional difficulties which include, for example, the extreme diversity in the faculty's profiles. Although they belong to the same profession, teacher educators constitute a highly heterogeneous population made up of varied academic backgrounds and administrative ranks in the education system. Depending on their credentials, some are covered by the higher education statutes, while others are affiliated with the pre-college education systems; in fact, some members of the latter category continue to hold the rank of secondary school teachers, in spite of the fact they have been teacher educators for several years. This diversity is a source of many difficulties such as divergence in career interests, lack of common vision about the profession and, of course, conflict in the ways the actual work of teacher education is

to be done. Along with this diversity is the problem of the relatively lower socio-professional status of teacher educators as compared with their colleagues in other tertiary education institutions. This is reflected not only in their low-level representation in the hierarchy of the system, but also in their limited power in decision-making at the ministry level. For example, they are not always consulted on major ministry decisions that involve them directly. They are, instead, often treated as simple implementers of ministry's directives and even threatened with a chain of unexpected and destabilizing changes.

Teacher educators are also faced with persistent pedagogical issues. These revolve around the question of the relevance of the training which is often taxed with being too theoretical and little connected with the reality of the schools, in addition to having little coherence among the different courses and between these and teaching practice. In the same vein, the training methodology is blamed for being lecture based, instead of being directed towards hands-on experience. In order to resolve this relevance issue, a number of new approaches are being introduced such as the CBA in teacher education, the modular curriculum organization and the use of ICT; however, these innovations have not significantly improved the actual training practices: (e.g. targeting practical competencies, but with the same lecturing tradition). In some cases, these innovations have added to the confusion of how to best provide training and in so doing have created more problems than they have resolved.

The Teacher Supervision Facet: Leadership for Learning as Maintaining the Balance Between Change and Protecting the Status Quo

While the teacher trainers are the main leaders of learning at the early stage of the classroom teacher's career and a distant source of influence on school children, the school inspectors, in contrast, have a more permanent presence in the teacher's professional life and exert a more durable influence on classroom learning. They play multiple learning-related leadership roles in the entire system by providing supervision and in-service training to teachers. In addition, they participate in conceptualizing and implementing educational change in the upper levels of educational management. They are entrusted with a high level of authority and they do use it with both the classroom teachers and the educational administrators. For example, teachers may not easily initiate change in using the textbooks without the inspectors' approval. Similarly, the education authorities, including the ministry, cannot introduce any learning-related change without their input. Their leadership for learning takes two seemingly conflicting forms: on the one hand, they perform the function of 'gatekeepers' of school pedagogy by exercising control over the teaching-learning practices in the classroom, even if it means curbing positive change; on the other hand, they collaborate, above the school level, on the search for innovation and certainly for institutionally validated resolution of problems observed in the classrooms. The authority for this leadership is drawn from their

professional expertise, including their teaching experience, their formal training in education supervision and from the legally grounded status bestowed upon them by the central system.

Although school inspectors hold an important place in the system, they have lately seen their profession gradually undermined, as a result of the emerging doubts about their overall performance in the system. These doubts are best reflected in the recent closing, albeit temporary, of their national training centre, which has led to a severe reduction in their total population – a reduction which has been aggravated by the early retirement of many of them. These complications have inevitably translated into a lower level of teacher supervision in schools. To compensate for this deficit, school principals are finding themselves increasingly involved in pedagogical supervision within their own schools and therefore weakening the inspectors' place in the system. This is indeed a case of conflict over pedagogical leadership, a conflict that may further be exacerbated over time if it is not properly addressed.

The Pedagogical Facet: Learning Leadership Through Curriculum Design and Innovative Instructional Approaches

The curriculum constitutes the core of leadership for learning. It is this constituent that is made up of the essential ingredients of learning leadership, namely instructional innovation, responding to learners' needs and improving learning outcomes. In Morocco, the school curriculum, in its larger sense, has become an area where educators strongly compete for educational leadership. As a result of ending the ministry's monopoly on textbook production and the privatizing of this industry, a number of pedagogical leaders (essentially inspectors, teacher educators and classroom instructors) have developed the practice of constituting themselves into special groups of textbook writers, with business investment from publishing companies. Their work consists mainly in interpreting the terms of reference developed by the Ministry of Education on material development and in developing draft textbooks that are subsequently evaluated by specialized reviewers selected by the ministry from among the distinguished educators of the country. The mission of these reviewers is to ensure that the textbooks comply with the terms of reference and present the features of effective learning materials.

This transfer of textbook production from the monopoly by the Ministry of Education to the private sector constitutes a daring management innovation that carries a lot of important consequences. The most important of these is that it liberates the pedagogical creativity of those who venture into the experience and creates a new generation of national learning leaders who have to compete by producing innovative and attractive materials for teachers and students. Some of the textbook authors have become pedagogical authorities and very popular among school teachers, as a result of the success of their textbooks. In many ways, this management innovation (privatization) has 'democratized' leadership in materials production in that it has liberated textbook production from the hands of the 'officially appointed few' and has made it accessible to all those who wish to compete. The other result

of this privatization is that it generates a wealth of learning materials for teachers and students, since the policy is that there should be a least two officially approved textbooks for each academic discipline in each grade level.

This leadership through textbook production is largely enriched by certain learning-focused international education projects funded by donor countries or international agencies. While these projects are developed on the basis of the national reforms and in full partnership with the Ministry of Education, the leadership roles in design and implementation are taken by Moroccan educationists who find in these projects excellent opportunities to sharpen their expertise by keeping abreast of new educational trends and practices, liberating their own educational creativity and making recognized contributions to the improvement of teacher competence and students' learning. One such initiative directly connected with the quality of school learning is the ALEF[12] project which has developed and implemented a pedagogical package known as Morocco's Relevance Program – a set of training and instructional materials intended to make students' school learning useful and closely related to the needs of practical life.[13] Among the special features of this program is the fact that it has opened new frontiers for students' learning and shown the usefulness of targeting such real-life domains as the world of business, professional activities and the practices of positive citizenship. It is also a program that has been developed in a bottom-up approach, starting from the teachers' innovative instructional activities (after training, of course) and moving to the finalization of instructional modules that have subsequently been integrated in school curricula and teacher education programs. This 'pedagogical creativity' constitutes an opportunity for teachers to use and further develop their leadership not only for their own professional learning, but also for the improvement of the quality of their students' learning, not to speak of the badly needed professional recognition and sense of pride that are derived from this experience.

Although the Moroccan curriculum leaders have contributed several improvements, the system continues to exhibit important dysfunctions in students' learning. A lot of work remains to be done to ensure better results from the privatization of textbook production, to achieve a successful implementation of the CBA and learner-centred pedagogy, to combat the persistent tradition of rote- and content-based learning, to ensure greater relevance of the curriculum content, to improve the practices of students' evaluation and to fully integrate ICT in teaching and learning. Although most of these improvements are being targeted in the current reform (as indicated in the earlier section on the policy facet), their real implementation will be largely dependent on the goodwill and full participation of the curriculum designers and implementers.

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[12]The full name of the project is: Advancing Learning and Employability for a better Future. It is funded by USAID and administered by a consortium of firms led by the Washington-based Academy for Educational Development.

[13]Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur, de la formation des cadres et de la recherche scientifique – Département de l'enseignement scolaire et Projet ALEF-USAID (2009a).

The School Management Facet: Awakening to the School Principals' Role in Quality Education

For a long time, school principals in Morocco were simple administrators who were given the job as a restful pre-retirement activity. Over the last few years, and with the current reform, it has become evident that the performance of a school is largely dependent on the qualities of its principal, and especially on his/her involvement in student learning. To the dissatisfaction of school inspectors who are traditionally the ones officially responsible for pedagogical matters, school principals are increasingly taking on the role of learning leaders by creating conditions that are conducive to effective student learning and measurable achievement. They are becoming more and more accountable for the achievement of their student population. To enable them to improve their performance, the educational authorities have been offering them a variety of training programs in which student learning is an important focus. An important example of this training is the one that has recently been provided on the new model of the 'School Development Project'[14] in which the quality of student learning and achievement is the central goal.

However, despite their increasing leadership roles in student learning and the efforts made by the education authorities to support their work, school principals are facing enormous professional difficulties. For example, although their role in pedagogical supervision of teachers is legally provided for, it is widely contested not only by the teachers themselves, but also by the school inspectors who are perceived by most as the only educators fully and exclusively qualified to take on this role. This contested legitimacy of pedagogical leadership within the school is further complicated by the limited resources that school principals receive (administrative, logistical and financial) and the wide range of management responsibilities that they have to shoulder vis-à-vis the staff, the community and the regional or provincial authorities, all of which largely distracts their attention away from the focus on students' learning.

The Instructional Facet: Teachers as the Frontline Learning Leaders

In all the education systems, teachers are the learning leaders who exert most direct influence on students. Those who function as true leaders mediate their students' learning not only by implementing the curriculum, but also by taking personal initiatives and introducing innovations in their teaching to ensure education

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[14]Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur, de la formation des cadres et de la recherché scientifique – Département de l'enseignement scolaire et Projet ALEF-USAID (2009b).

quality. This leadership is facilitated by the training they receive, the status and job security they are granted, the relative instructional freedom they enjoy and the opportunities they have for impacting pedagogical decisions at the local level, including participation in school governance. In order to enhance their leadership, the education authorities offer them different professional development services. In addition to attending regular workshops organized by inspectors, teachers receive full-fledged in-service training programs that are provided at the different levels (regional, provincial or local) and that accompany every kind of official development. More interestingly, the ministry has instituted a prestigious teaching-oriented degree known as the 'aggregation', a high level academic and pedagogical training (borrowed from the French educational tradition) that ensures the strong academic and pedagogic mastery of one of the disciplines taught in secondary schools. The teachers who have graduated from this program are considered distinguished leaders in the teaching of their respective subjects (especially mathematics and science). They are often appointed in the prestigious Moroccan high schools, especially those that provide the so-called Classes Préparatoires.[15] The population of teachers with the title of 'agrégé', though still small, constitutes a highly respected corps of educational leaders in the education system, for they are the ones who ensure adequate preparation of students for top engineering and business schools in Morocco and in francophone Europe.

Despite the initiatives undertaken, teachers' leadership is undermined by several unfavourable factors, especially in the last two decades. The most important of these factors are described as follows:

- *The standardization of the teaching profession*: With the dramatic increase in teacher population – which now exceeds a quarter of a million in pre-college education alone – the education system has developed full-fledged training programs and all possible instructional guides and set methodologies that teachers are called upon to follow more or less closely in their teaching. Over the years, many teachers have found themselves gradually becoming implementers of pre-set guidelines, instead of being totally responsible for their own teaching.
- *The pressure of students' evaluation*: As happens in many educational contexts, teachers find themselves 'teaching to the tests' and therefore deprived of their creativity, as a result of the pressure of local, regional or national school exams.
- *The increasing and various societal demands*: These include, for example, the pressure for better student results (both quantitative and qualitative), the demand to compensate for societal inadequacies and cultural change, the urge to integrate the ever-changing technologies and innovations and the pressure to abandon the traditional teaching methods and to participate in the reshaping of the school curricula. With these challenges, teachers find themselves at a loss as to where they should turn their attention.

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[15] See footnote 10.

- *The unfavourable work conditions such as the large and heterogeneous classes and the scarcity of instructional resources (laboratories, teaching aids, etc.)*: These difficulties are often aggravated by the inadequate living conditions for teachers in rural areas (distance from home, lack of acceptable housing, problem of transportation, etc.). These challenges can significantly limit teachers' efforts for achieving effective student learning and are indeed the source of severe dysfunctions such as teacher absenteeism, students' underachievement and even dropping out.
- *Inadequate teacher education and supervision:* The training and supervision that teachers are offered suffer from several inadequacies. (For discussion of this sub-topic, see the sections on teacher education and teacher supervision).

Moving Beyond Student Learning: Educational Leaders as Leaders of Communities of Learners

As pointed out earlier, leadership for learning is not meant to focus only on students; it is also meant to directly serve and benefit the community of educators. Viewed from this angle, educators do not only facilitate the learning of others, but they also do the same for themselves, often in a collaborative manner. This kind of leadership is about the learning of the leaders for the sake of their own professional and personal development, although ultimately, the students are bound to benefit from it. Typically, the initiators of this learning are the leaders themselves or some other informal or non-official (not ministry-related) party. In Morocco, a number of unofficial and independent initiatives have been taken to develop this type of leadership. Perhaps the most common are the professional associations of teachers created around the special academic disciplines taught in schools (science, English, French, etc.) or professional category (teacher training, school management, career advising, etc.). Organized as 'communities of learners' and legally registered with the authorities, these associations constitute an inexpensive and efficient medium for both personal and professional development. Their main activities revolve around the sharing of expertise through annual conferences, regional workshops and educational publications. Some of them have gained a level of capability that has allowed them to provide certain educational services (e.g. training, communication, etc.) at a respectable level, which has sometimes earned them formal partnerships with the ministry for collaboration or joint activities or projects.

Another community-based pattern of leadership for learning is the gathering of educators around pedagogical or management innovations. This takes the form of workshops that bring together educators of different categories (inspectors, teachers, school principals and community leaders) for sharing 'best practices' implemented in the classrooms and in the larger school environment. An example of this kind of event is what is known in Morocco as the 'Ateliers de partage,

d'approfondissement et de regulation' – APARs[16] (or 'best practices' workshops). After its development and experimentation in a number of regions by the ALEF project,[17] this model has been adopted by several educational authorities and pedagogical groups. It is generally found to be a medium for professional collaboration and for the creation or reinforcement of communities of learners. The autonomy of these communities vis-à-vis the official authorities gives them room for liberating their educational creativity as well developing their professional confidence.

In the same vein, an increasing number of educators have created for themselves electronically based networks. One of these networks is the one provided by the portal 'www.tarbiya.ma' which was developed by a partnership between a group of private entities. It is an independent platform that enjoys total autonomy vis-à-vis the ministry and allows educators to exchange teaching and learning experiences, in addition to accessing electronic self-training modules and other helpful information (official announcements, instructional innovations, etc.). A more informal type of learning network is that of discussion groups or forums that are created at the initiative of one or more educators and that allow special interest groups (e.g. science teachers or teacher educators) from different regions not only to exchange educational views and experiences, but also to consult on critical issues and defend their profession, especially within the context of the current reform.

The above community-centred practices are a fast-growing pattern of leadership for learning. Educators are drawing more and more often on their own resources for their own professional development. This comes as a result of the increasing needs for continuous learning, the difficulty for the official authorities to adequately respond to these needs, the growing culture of self-help and collaborative learning and, of course, the expanding access to technology. However, despite its growing presence on the educational scene, this kind of leadership for learning is still largely limited, especially in view of the potential role it can play in the professional learning of the education community. In order to enable this leadership to develop further, the official authorities may need to strengthen the educationally oriented associations and networks through relevant training, opportunities for distance learning, wider access to technology and allocation of grants, while, at the same time, maintaining, and even reinforcing, their autonomy and unofficial character.

Conclusion: Some Generalizations About Leadership for Learning

From the present case study, we can draw some generalizations about the nature of leadership for learning, especially as it relates to an education system like that of Morocco. The first generalization is that this leadership is not the monopoly of any

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[16] The literal translation: 'Workshops for Sharing, Deepening and Regulation'.

[17] See footnote 12.

given individual or group of individuals; neither is it limited to any aspect of the education sector. It is a characteristic that can be claimed not only by individuals or groups, but also by institutions as such. As seen in the present case study, different professional groups and specialized institutions take initiatives and contribute to student learning, despite the fact that they do so in different ways. On this basis, leadership for learning can be said to be multidimensional and multilateral. However, this diversity in aspect and roles is matched by a common goal which is that of achieving learning, The complexity of the education domain requires a distribution of responsibilities among the different sub-sectors and stakeholders; however, these responsibilities, as different as they may be, complement each other and converge towards the same goal.

The second generalization is that leadership for learning is about quality in both the goal and the process: its target is the quality of learning, regardless of whether the beneficiaries are the students or the professional community. For this learning to be at the highest possible level, the actions to be undertaken must reflect a search of excellence. It must be admitted, though, that quality and excellence are relative concepts conditioned by various contextual factors, and that leadership is a matter of demonstrating effort, attempting to create some form of gain (in relation to a given starting point) and not necessarily achieving this gain or attaining a fixed or an externally defined result. It is, therefore, defined by the effort and the quality of the action and not necessarily by the result. The attainment of the result is dependent on a host of factors and not only on leadership. As shown in the present case study, leadership is demonstrated in different educational domains and by different professionals; yet, the overall performance of the system is still far from being satisfactory. Leadership for learning, on its own (certainly a low or even moderate level of it) is not enough to guarantee high performance in an education system.

The third generalization is that leadership for learning is made up of certain core actions, despite the diversity of the parties involved and their roles. These actions include taking initiative and calculated risks, innovating, modelling, problem-solving, planning, implementing, evaluating, communicating, mobilizing and collaborating. They need, of course, to be supported by certain key values such as the sense of positive change, goal-directedness and perseverance.

The fourth generalization is that leadership for learning is affected by several factors which can promote or discourage leadership. In the context related to the present case study, the most important of these factors (positive or negative) relate to the working conditions, the resources made available by the education system, policy and management, the training received, the status of the profession and of course the professional culture, especially the extent to which initiative and creativity are encouraged.

Because it is affected by all above factors, leadership for learning cannot be assumed to exist as an inherent constituent of all education systems; instead, the extent to which it is present in a given system is largely dependent on how much it is promoted by the different stakeholders. This promotion is (or should be) done in different ways. Among these is the development of a strong system of incentives for initiative taking, innovation and distinction in job performance. This system

may include not only rewards and recognition but also measures of accountability. Educational training can also play an important role in this general effort, by fostering teacher creativity and emphasizing strategies for effective school learning such as critical thinking, independent learning and the use of technology. Quality learning is badly needed in many education systems and this cannot be ensured without the promotion of strong educational leadership.

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Chapter 11
Leadership for Learning: Research Findings and Frontiers from Down Under

Neil Dempster, Greg Robson, and Mike Gaffney

Introduction

Over recent times, there has been a resurgence of research interest in the role of school leaders in leading learning. This has been brought about by increasing awareness of the actions of leaders, especially principals, in supporting student achievement. Consistent with developments internationally, there are signs that Australian and New Zealand research on the relationship between leadership actions and student learning in schools is moving beyond the generation of lists of broad leadership qualities and behaviours to an examination of the more specific leadership capabilities and organisational features necessary for improved learning in particular school contexts. The support of the Australian government for the *Principals as Literacy Leaders* (PALL) research project, an initiative we refer to later in this chapter (see http://www.appa.asn.au/index.php/research-projects/principals-as-literacy-leaders) and the support of the New Zealand government for school principals' development programs (see Chap. 37) are cases in point. Both examples place an explicit focus on leadership capabilities known to contribute to improving outcomes for students whatever their circumstances. Along with these research and policy trends, there is growing evidence of the need for practical, research-validated conceptual frameworks to help school leaders and leadership teams bring about sustained improvement in student learning outcomes.

The resurgence of interest in leadership and learning to which we have referred is an important counter to the mounting management pressures that have been evident in school education over the past 30 years. These management pressures

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are seen, for example, in the heavy reform agendas set by politicians in pursuit of internationally comparable student performance benchmarks, in the effects of the 'league table' positioning of schools and in the risk aversion behaviours of school authorities in an increasingly litigious society. In the face of these pressures, school leaders have been drawn inexorably away from the clear moral purpose they should embrace in their professional work. That moral purpose is to improve the lives of students through learning. Leaders therefore, we argue, have a professional obligation to direct their leadership towards the enhancement of learning.

This is not to discount the need to give continuing attention to management tasks and responsibilities. In fact, we recognise that many actions associated with *leadership for learning* overlap with those in the management and accountability domains, and that this can give rise to leadership tensions. For example, the value of evidence to inform decision making about learning improvement and its simultaneous use to comply with accountability requirements can sit, sometimes uncomfortably, together. Our hope is that the research studies and possibilities cited in this chapter offer encouragement to school leaders to focus their efforts on matters which have been found to have both direct and indirect connections with children's learning and student achievement.

In other words, while managing a 'tight ship' financially is necessary, while keeping the school's reputation in the community 'clean' is a continuing challenge and while meeting the demands of politicians and policy makers are ongoing responsibilities, these management issues create pressures which often lead to school principals spending the bulk of their time on them. The reinstatement of student learning and achievement as the most important focus for school leaders has provoked a vigorous interest in research into the connections between leadership and learning and the impact of the one on the other.

Throughout the chapter we take the view that leadership is best understood from two perspectives: (1) *positional leadership*, that is leadership associated with a formal position of authority in the school organisation; and (2) *leadership as activity*, where leadership is viewed as a feature of the school community in which different individuals or groups (regardless of their role in the organisational hierarchy) assume responsibility for some aspect of school life. From either perspective, the exercise and impact of leadership may be identified to the extent that various leaders within the school community can make a positive and meaningful difference to the learning and lives of others. Hence, both positional leadership and leadership enacted regardless of hierarchical roles are essential in schools. It is an understanding of this duality that underpins the approach we take to discussion in this chapter.

To explore the connections between leadership and learning, we structure the chapter into four parts. First, we review a sample of recent Australian and New Zealand research and scholarship on the links between leaders, leadership and learning to highlight emerging concepts and findings in this part of the world. Second, we illustrate how research into leadership for learning is being carried out with the description and examination of a particular case (the PALL Pilot Project, an action research project funded by the Australian government). Third, we outline a series of

implications for politicians, policy makers, school leaders, parents and the wider community which are aimed at giving learning the ongoing prominence it needs if leaders are to remain focused on the moral purpose of the school's work. Finally, we conclude the chapter by highlighting future leadership for learning research frontiers as questions to which research efforts should be directed in the future.

Australian and New Zealand Research and Scholarship on Links Between Leadership and Learning

A selection of contemporary Australian and New Zealand research and scholarly writing on the connection between leadership practice and improved student learning can be classified under at least three themes. We examine writing on *literacy and numeracy improvement*, *subject area improvement* and *leadership and learning improvement* in the discussion which follows.

Literacy and Numeracy Improvement

The learning area that has been subject to most systemic investment and development in Australia is literacy**.** From the early 1990s, most Australian education authorities developed or adopted what might be termed 'literacy improvement programs'. These initiatives represented a break from previous efforts that focused on the provision of 'teacher proof' support materials or commercially produced programs in reading, oral language or spelling, for example. The focus of the new wave of literacy improvement programs has been to enhance the pedagogical repertoire of teachers through the provision of professional development workshops, expert consultancy and teacher support texts and other resource material. Academic researchers have played an important role in the development and implementation of these initiatives as well as in researching their impact. In some instances, academic specialists developed literacy programs independent of government and non-government school sectors and made them available for adoption in all schools. Examples include work at the University of Wollongong, New South Wales, by Brian Cambourne on the conditions for learning and constructivist approaches to the teaching of reading (Cambourne 1988) and the *Accelerated Literacy* program initially conceived by Brian Gray at the University of Canberra ACT, and then further developed at Charles Darwin University in the Northern Territory (Gray 2007).

Examples of systemic initiatives for improving literacy include the *First Steps* program developed by the Western Australia government school system, subsequently adopted by several other Australian government and non-government systems, as well as overseas; the *Early Years Literacy* (EYL) program in Victoria

(Hill and Crévola 1997); the Children's Literacy Success Strategy (*CLaSS*), project developed by the Catholic school sector in Victoria (Crevola and Hill 2000), and the related *Raising Achievement in Schools* (RAISe) initiative in Catholic schools in Western Australia (Hayes and Noonan 2009; Wildy and Faulkner 2008) and the *Getting it Right* literacy project in Western Australia (Meiers and Ingvarson 2006). In New South Wales public schools there has been substantial investment in the *Reading Recovery* program, an early reading intervention developed in New Zealand (Clay 1993). This program has been adopted, though less widely and with less dedicated systemic investment, in other Australian states, territories, school sectors and schools.

Each of these initiatives has contained an element of 'leadership for learning' but with limited emphasis and significance. In reality, most projects have sought to enhance the expertise of classroom teachers and/or to build groups of literacy 'specialists' as leaders of learning. These teachers have typically received advanced training in particular literacy teaching methodologies so that they can advise, coach or model to other teachers the techniques needed to improve literacy learning. Alternatively, they have used this training to enhance their capacity to teach individuals or small groups of students with specific literacy needs or learning shortfalls.

We argue that in general terms the leadership focus of these literacy initiatives has been narrow, relying mainly on the acquisition and deployment of technical or content expertise. Further, while research reports of these initiatives typically draw attention to the importance of 'leadership' in successful implementation, the specific roles and forms of leadership appear to have been either understated or taken for granted. For example, the report of the *Getting it Right* literacy strategy in Western Australia details the work of 200 trained literacy specialists and refers to the crucial leadership role they played in the success of participating schools (Meiers and Ingvarson 2006). While often mentioned in research commentary, there appears to be an almost standard but uncritical and underdeveloped explanation and acknowledgement of the importance of leadership activity in the many and varied literacy projects that Australia has implemented.

Nevertheless, there are some programs that have adopted a more sophisticated perspective drawn directly from research literature about the role and importance of leadership for learning. One example is the *Early Years Literacy* (EYL) program in Victoria which adopted a design framework for achieving improvement in literacy learning outcomes in Victorian primary schools. Similar to the School Excellence Model outlined in the Singapore government's *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation* educational reforms (Mok 2003), the Victorian initiative encouraged and supported school-level leadership to plan and implement changes to literacy practices within a broader schoolwide framework. The EYL design framework emphasised the role of leadership in developing common values, the use of data, engaging the community and resourcing and sponsoring professional learning for teachers (Hill and Crévola 1997, 2005; Fullan et al. 2006). However as Fullan et al. (2006) acknowledge, these early attempts at implementing a design framework for improving literacy were not ultimately successful because of an insufficient recognition of the need to build within school capacity, and by implication, the capacity of school leaders to plan, guide, monitor and evaluate literacy learning.

In contrast to the heavy emphasis on literacy improvement, there has been relatively less attention given to student achievement in numeracy by Australian governments and school systems. This discrepancy has been recently recognised by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in funding a national numeracy review (COAG 2008). This review drew from a range of sources, including the *Early Numeracy Research Project* conducted by Monash University and the Australian Catholic University (McDonough and Clarke 2003). Their research identified highly effective teachers of mathematics in the early years of schooling. The key measure of effectiveness was growth in student mathematical understanding as revealed in student interview assessment data from over 11,000 students. Extensive lesson observations and interviews with accomplished teachers by researchers identified 25 characteristics in the effective teaching of mathematics in the early school years. These initiatives spawned subsequent program development including the *Success in Numeracy Education* project (see http://web.ceomelb.catholic.edu.au/index.php?sectionid=57), and related research into the nature of effective numeracy teaching and learning, and how this is supported by the exercise of leadership at classroom and school levels (Gaffney and Faragher 2010).

The importance of a design framework for improving student outcomes in literacy and numeracy as well as in other areas of learning has been further developed in the Australian context by Caldwell and Spinks (2008) in their framework for school transformation. The use of research-grounded design frameworks is also evident in pilot projects funded under the Australian government 'Literacy and Numeracy Pilots in Low SES School Communities' initiative (see http://www.deewr.gov.au/literacyandnumeracy). One example of this appears in the 'Leading Aligned Numeracy Development' Pilot Project, undertaken by the Australian Catholic University in partnership with the Catholic Education Offices of the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. This research is investigating links between the development of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in mathematics and the exercise of educational leadership by principals and teacher leaders (as members of school-based teams), and the consequences of this interplay for student achievement in numeracy (see http://landproject.wetpaint.com/).

In considering the relationship between leadership and learning in the two most critical of learning areas, this brief overview of longstanding literacy and more recent numeracy improvement initiatives in Australia can be described as a journey of developing awareness about the connections between the two concepts. It is only in the last half decade that research attention has begun to be given explicitly to the power of the partnership between leadership and learning for improved achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Subject Area Improvement

While we say that our review suggests that there has been limited empirical work to this point on the connections between leadership and learning in Australia, there have been a considerable number of projects dealing with improvements in subject

teaching and learning where the main focus has been on teachers as leaders in their area of subject specialisation. Examples where teacher leadership is prominent include research in the areas of information and communication technology (ICT) (McCarron 2006; Marshall 2004), science (Burke da Silva 2008), vocational education (Blewett and Cowie 2006; Kilvert 2002) and religious education (Healy 2006). An exception to the teacher leadership focus is found in the recent work by Dinham (2008) on the links between exceptional educational outcomes in junior secondary schools in English, Mathematics and Science and perceived attributes of school principals. We discuss each of the works cited below.

McCarron (2006) and Marshall (2004) were concerned with the better integration of ICT in education. McCarron discusses the role that teacher–librarians should take in supporting teachers to develop ICT pedagogy across the curriculum, and in fact suggests that they have a leadership responsibility in this important dimension of contemporary schooling. Marshall turns the spotlight onto the leadership and management challenges for teachers which must be met when trying to create an environment conducive to sustaining effective ICT usage in teaching and learning.

Burke da Silva (2008) puts forward an argument for leadership development in science using experienced scientists to engage teachers and students in the conventions and methods of scientific research. Blewett and Cowie (2006) examine the role of department heads in the implementation of vocational education programs in New Zealand. Their findings highlight the need for department heads to foster shared vision, values and beliefs among vocational education teacher colleagues working in professional learning communities. Kilvert (2002) discusses the need for a new curriculum construct in vocational education supported by new organisational or management frameworks, which include a broader view of leadership across the institution.

In her doctoral research work, Healy (2006) asserts that religious education coordinators need to concentrate on working with staff members to develop sound religious content knowledge and their personal response to that knowledge if improved understanding is to be achieved by students.

Dinham (2008) reports the findings of a study undertaken in 38 high schools in NSW where the researchers attempted to trace the links between exceptional educational outcomes in junior secondary schools in areas such as English, Mathematics and Science and the perceived attributes of school principals. The data which form the basis for his conclusions are drawn from case studies of the schools (observations and interviews with school personnel). Dinham posits that seven categories of leadership attributes and practices contribute to exceptional outcomes. These include a central focus on students, on learning and teaching as well as factors such as articulation of a vision with expectations of success, teacher learning and a bias towards action and innovation. While these attributes mirror much of what the broader corpus of leadership research evidence has suggested, the study is typical of many in the leadership genre. It is descriptive, illustrative and confirmatory in style and tone. While useful in its depiction of school leadership, Dinham's work does not press beyond description into how these attributes are developed and their relationship with one another.

Examples from the body of research and scholarly writing cited earlier highlight the importance of leadership at school level (by principals, department heads and teachers) to improve subject pedagogy. However, there is limited evidence of the tasks or actions these school leaders need to take if their work is to make a difference to students' learning and performance. That said, there are several messages that we take into our thinking about *leadership for learning* from this work. These are the need for school leaders to (a) foster common understandings of the vision and values which underpin effective teaching and learning; (b) recognise and develop the capacity of teacher leaders; (c) develop appropriate organisational arrangements if learning is to be supported and (d) design professional learning processes which attend to teachers' needs, particularly pedagogical content knowledge related to a teacher's subject domain and specialisation.

Leadership and Learning Improvement

The third theme in research and scholarship associated with *leadership for learning* relates to the role of the principal as a leader in partnership with others (teachers, students and community members), within and beyond the school, to bring about improvement in student learning. This area of interest focuses on the strategic role of the principal in orchestrating school improvement by emphasising the links between school vision, teaching practices, school organisation and infrastructure, and community relationships. Findings from a range of Australian and New Zealand studies of school leaders and leadership are presented below.

Halford (2009), confirming the claim with which we introduced this chapter, reports a 'sudden increase' in the professional literature on the emphasis placed on principals as the leaders of learning in their schools. Indeed he draws attention to the view that a dedication to leading learning is the most important activity in which principals should engage. He goes on to discuss some of these activities including principals taking a teaching load, attending to the analysis and use of school data to inform professional learning and taking an active part in classroom observation with teachers. These findings have the ring of common sense about them, but they are drawn from recent empirical research predominantly in the Australian school context (Chapman 2008; Duignan 2007).

Judith Chapman offers the following insights in her report for the OECD entitled '*Learning Centric Leadership*'. Chapman argues that effective school principals adopt evidence-based approaches, have high expectations and use the external pressures of high-stakes external testing to enhance their schools' performance (Chapman 2008). She concludes that it is principals' abilities to 'centre the school on learning as its central purpose' that determines their effectiveness as school leaders (Chapman 2008, p. 30). Patrick Duignan takes a similar view of principal behaviour. In his research on successful Australian school principals, Duignan (2007, p. 68) found such principals displayed 'strong support for learning, growth and development'.

Related to these findings is research by Moss (2008) on teacher professional learning through school/university partnerships, using a case study of a Victorian secondary college. Through such partnerships, he argues, both teacher learning and leadership can be developed and exercised. This research finding is consistent with calls made in the OECD report by Chapman (2008) on principals' professional growth about the importance of connections beyond the school in promoting and sustaining a focus on learning. On this basis, further research on the efficacy of connections beyond the school (such as school–university partnerships) in promoting *leadership for learning* for principals and teachers is clearly warranted.

The concurrent development of school leadership capability by principals and teachers was the focus of research undertaken by Bezzina et al. (2007). Entitled 'Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners' (Bezzina 2008) the research focused on the ways in which moral purpose informs both leadership and learning. Data from the pilot phase conducted in a sample of Australian Catholic Schools highlighted the benefits to schools of making moral purpose explicit and of having an overarching framework linking this purpose with learning and leadership practices. The findings confirmed the importance of shared leadership and also identified a key role for strong individual leadership – particularly in the early stages of initiatives. The findings also show that teachers have found that the explicitness of the framework gives them a common point of reference and is assisting them to overcome initial reticence in seeing themselves as leaders.

Chapman's (2008) work, cited above, referred to the use which can be made by principals of external test results. Currently, Australian schools are experiencing the pressures of a significant bank of external testing, having had, recently, aspects of their performance documented, compared and made available to the public on a website called 'My School' (http://www.myschool.edu.au/). In addition to this national initiative which provides a descriptive database on the performance of all Australian schools, analytical work has been carried out by particular states on their standing in comparison with the performance of students in other states and territories. One such example is the commissioning by the Queensland government of a 'worldwide' review to study the implications of nationwide standardised external testing and provide recommendations for improving the performance of Queensland students. The review was conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (Masters 2009). Recommendations included reference to the important role that accomplished leaders play in student learning. In justifying the recommendation, Masters referred to international research findings, stating that successful school systems and leaders ensure quality learning by building a school culture of high expectations; setting targets for improvement; employing teachers who have deep knowledge and understanding of key content areas; enhancing staff and leadership capacity; monitoring teacher practice, student learning and performance continuously; and allocating physical and human resources to improve learning.

Making Hope Practical in Schools is the subtitle of the book reporting on a longitudinal study of learning and its leadership by Lingard et al. (2003). These authors report findings from their work in Queensland schools and conclude that critical to the work of positional leaders and teacher leaders is the alignment of curriculum,

pedagogy and assessment. Amongst other things, their research confirms the importance of direct curriculum coordination and monitoring of teaching by school leaders. Lingard et al. (2003) also argue a strong research case for the dispersal of leadership to teachers throughout the school if students' learning is to be enhanced.

A number of the findings from the study by Lingard et al. (2003) are supported in later work by Robinson (2007) in a report prepared during the *New Zealand Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Program* on the effects of leadership on learning and achievement. The program was charged with the task of describing the state of contemporary knowledge from existing research findings on teaching, learning and leadership. As part of this project, Robinson (2007) distilled findings about leadership effects on student learning. She concluded that leaders affect learning when they promote and participate in teacher professional development; plan, coordinate and evaluate teaching and the curriculum; establish goals and expectations; manage resources strategically and ensure an orderly and supportive environment.

Of these five 'inductively derived leadership dimensions', Robinson (2007, p. 7) argues that the most significant is an active involvement in professional development by school leaders, particularly by principals. Her work is important because she has been able to show the 'effect size' (pp. 7–8) for all five dimensions. Direct participation of principals in professional learning with their teachers was shown to have the greatest effect size, and is therefore the most powerful influence leaders can have on the quality of teaching and student learning and achievement. Robinson also found that the curriculum leadership role played by principals to be important in improving the quality of teaching and learning. She explains that this involves direct coordination of curriculum responsibilities and monitoring of teaching quality and student achievement.

The remaining three dimensions of Robinson's (2007) work, while less influential than professional development and curriculum coordination in their impact on teaching and learning in the school, may be high leadership priorities depending on the circumstances faced by the school. For example, if there is not a safe environment for learning, this needs to be addressed in concert with the two dimensions which produce the greatest effects.

From the review to this point, there appears to be an emerging consensus on what leaders in schools should do to enhance student learning. This consensus is based upon making learning central to the principal's role, and includes the specific principal leadership behaviours of monitoring teacher quality, engaging with professional learning (including direct involvement with their teachers and other staff), building partnerships for learning outside the school, making a commitment to personal learning as a leader, working towards a shared vision, values and expectations for the school and directing resources to support learning.

Next, we draw attention to the theme of shared leadership and the work of Crowther et al. (2002), the associated work of Andrews and Crowther (2003, 2006) and Lewis and Andrews (2009) and the development of IDEAS (Innovative Design for Enhancing Achievement in Schools). IDEAS is an approach to whole school revitalisation that draws from both scholarship and research on leadership, but most particularly on the importance of teacher leadership. The IDEAS approach has been

implemented in schools in Queensland and in other states in Australia as well as in Singapore and Italy. It focuses on building alignment between the vision of the school and a schoolwide approach to pedagogy. Reports of the impact of implementing IDEAS draw attention to the need for a long term and consistent strategy to achieve the alignment that it seeks to generate. The approach draws strongly on the use of data to form the basis of the school staff and community's judgement of the school's effectiveness. Evaluations of IDEAS by Duignan (2002) and Wildy and Faulkner (2008) are generally supportive and positive about the impact of the approach – especially in generating deep insights about, and in reinforcing commitment to schoolwide reform. There is little doubt that IDEAS has played an important role in many Australian schools in the development of enhanced thinking about leadership practices. However, until relatively recently, there has been less evidence about the links between the IDEAS revitalisation processes and its impact on student learning outcomes. The latest evidence, based on a sample of schools in Victoria, suggests that IDEAS is having positive effects on outcomes for students in schools in low socio-economic communities.

Issues associated with leadership practised by teachers and principals in IDEAS (referred to as *parallel leadership*) are echoed in Lucas' (2005) doctoral study which drew on the indigenous icon of the 'meeting place' to investigate the significance of situational leadership, interpersonal relationships and shared knowledge in the creation of a learning organisation. Lucas' findings highlight the difficulties in creating learning organisations in educational environments where measures of performance are being increasingly narrowed. The centrality of shared or distributive leadership which both acknowledges and works within the school's context is the major finding.

Shared leadership is also a theme underpinning the research of Gunter and Fitzgerald (2007). These authors write from New Zealand and English perspectives about participative practices used by middle level leaders (heads of departments, year level coordinators) with their teachers and students. The purpose of their research was to examine links between learning, learners and middle leadership. Their findings show that students were largely the 'objects' of adult plans and had little say in learning or in their leadership of it. This study suggests that there is fertile ground for further research about student leadership and the student's role in learning to complement the shared nature of leadership enjoyed by the professional staff.

Our final selection from the literature is the special edition of the Australian journal, *Leading and Managing* published in 2006. It presented outcomes from a Cambridge University-led *Leadership for Learning* project. The research was funded by the Swedish Wallenberg Foundation and produced a series of five empirically derived principles for understanding the links between leadership and learning (MacBeath 2006). A common feature of these principles was that they were each directed to the moral purpose of improving learning. Contributors to the special edition highlighted the following: the significance of professional discourse or dialogue in linking leadership and learning (Swaffield 2006); the need to understand leadership as an activity involving collective human agency (Frost 2006) and the leadership roles of parents and students in enriching learning and improving achievement (Dempster and Johnson 2006).

Summary

The Australian and New Zealand literature we have examined carries many of the encouraging messages we signalled in the introduction of this chapter. While the empirical research base is still somewhat shallow, we argue that there are strong indications in an accumulating set of research findings, of the actions leaders should undertake to exert most influence on student learning. Foremost amongst these actions are that leaders need to:

1. Articulate common understandings of the vision and values which underpin learning so that a school's moral purpose is clear;
2. Develop appropriate organisational arrangements to capitalise on collective action through shared leadership both inside and outside the school;
3. Give attention to the professional learning needs of staff members, concentrating on quality classroom teaching, acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge and the development of supportive student relationships;
4. Value and model learning as central to their role;
5. Emphasise the integral role of professional conversations or dialogue about the improvement of student learning and achievement;
6. Ensure that the role of parents and students in learning is taken seriously by positional leaders and teachers, and parents and students themselves;
7. Harness the talents of members of the school and wider communities in support of student learning by those in school leadership roles.

In addition to this listing, we conclude that the following specific *principal* leadership behaviours must be in evidence: monitoring teacher quality, engaging with professional learning (including direct involvement with teachers and other staff), building partnerships for learning inside and outside the school, making a commitment to personal learning as a leader and directing resources to support learning.

The links between school leadership and student learning that have been high-lighted in this review point the way to the construction of frameworks for school leaders to guide their leadership activity in schools. We recognise that it is easier to construct models than to research their effects. So it is to this issue that we now turn our attention in the next two sections of the chapter, using our work on the Australian leadership project to which we referred in the chapter's introduction.

The Principals as Literacy Leaders Pilot Project

The PALL Pilot Project is funded under the Australian government *Literacy and Numeracy Pilots in Low Socio-Economic Status (SES) School Communities* initiative. PALL is designed to develop the capabilities of principals as effective literacy leaders. It addresses fundamental questions of the knowledge principals need in literacy teaching and learning, as well as the capabilities they need in school leadership to improve student literacy achievement in low SES school communities.

The project is aimed deliberately at assisting principals to examine student literacy achievement information and to understand and take action on the conditions in which literacy learning occurs in order to implement general improvement strategies or specific interventions in their schools. It is hoped that the outcomes of the project will define points of promise for sustained local and systemwide developments in literacy teaching and learning.

The platform for the PALL Pilot Project is summarised in the framework illustrated in Fig. 11.1. This framework developed by Dempster (2009) prior to the commencement of the project incorporates research findings encountered in the first section of the chapter and explains in propositional form how leadership and learning can be connected through the actions of principals and their teachers. Eight dimensions are considered important. The first of these dimensions places moral purpose at the heart of all educational activity.

In the PALL Pilot Project, when the framework shown in Fig. 11.1 is applied to literacy, its focus is the improvement of learning and literacy achievement. This is seen as a key component of the overall moral purpose of schooling for students and is shown at the centre of the figure. Moving out from the centre, we argue that literacy teaching and learning is enhanced when there is 'disciplined dialogue'
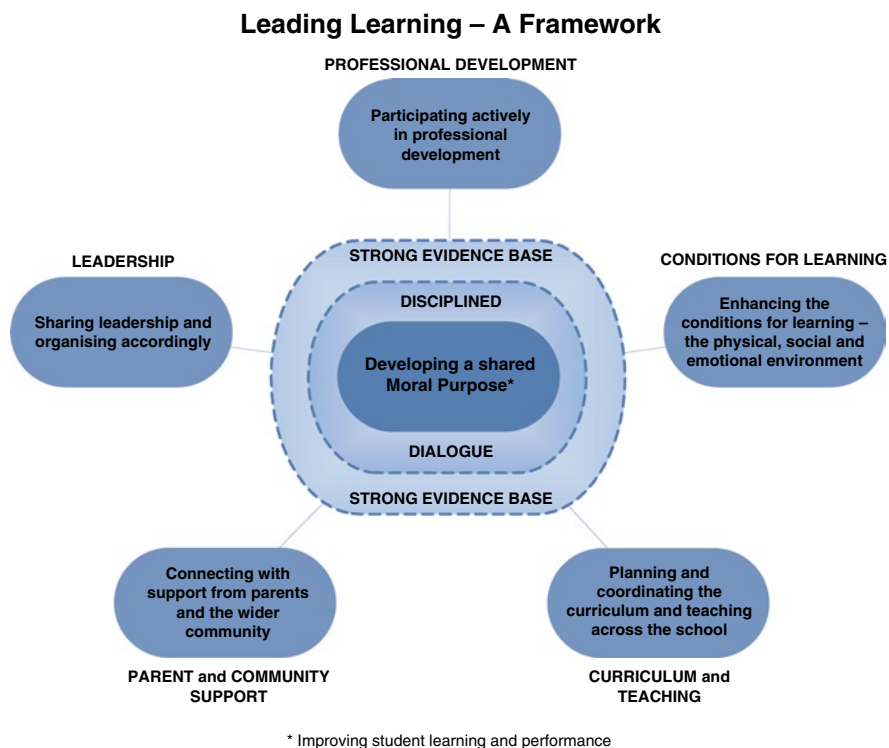
Fig. 11.1 A leadership for literacy learning blueprint

(Swaffield and Dempster 2009) amongst the professional staff based on sound qualitative and quantitative evidence.

The focus on moral purpose and the practice of disciplined dialogue are also attached to each of five other dimensions. At the top in Fig. 11.1 is the active involvement of school leaders in *professional development* about literacy learning with their teachers. Each of the other four dimensions also plays an important part. School leaders must pay close attention to their roles in *curriculum coordination* and the monitoring of literacy teaching, to the creation of the structures and processes for *sharing leadership* responsibilities for literacy with their teachers, to making connections with *parents and the wider community* that contribute to children's literacy learning, while never losing sight of the need for conducive physical, emotional and social *conditions for learning*. Figure 11.1 shows the relationship between the eight dimensions associated with leading literacy learning.

To put this Leadership for Literacy Learning Blue Print into practice, the project involves the development and trialling of a series of five professional development modules with four clusters of 15 primary school principals selected from low SES communities in Queensland, the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. The first two modules introduce principals to what the literature is saying about the aspects of school leaders' work which influence children's learning most, and what they need to know about learning to read (chosen as the literacy focus because of its foundational status) so that they are well prepared to work with their teachers on developing strategies to help struggling learners. The third module is designed to expand principals' capacities to use both qualitative and quantitative data as the basis for planning improvement strategies. In doing so, they practise the 'disciplined dialogue' process shown in Fig. 11.1 so that they are well prepared to conduct evidence-based professional conversations with their teachers. The fourth module opens up the issue of planning for literacy intervention action at three levels or waves. *Wave One* intervention involves planning activity for the whole school or whole class groups and *Wave Two* for smaller groups of children unable to benefit sufficiently from whole class activity. *Wave Three* intervention action is targeted at an even smaller group of children who are in need of individualised face-to-face or one-on-one attention. All intervention action is focused on identifying strategies which are directed towards the school's moral purpose of improved literacy learning and achievement for its students. The final module introduces principals to the tasks they need to be able to plan and implement with their teachers if they are to evaluate the effects of the interventions they have put in place following module four.

Principals are supported in the preparation for and follow-up from these modules by Literacy Achievement Advisors. These individuals (working on a 1 advisor to 15 principals ratio) have been appointed as mentors on the basis of their expertise in leadership and literacy and experience in disadvantaged communities. All in all, the first year of the project prepares principals to conduct broad ranging 'disciplined dialogue' with members of staff, ultimately enabling the school to assemble and analyse the necessary evidence on which to base targeted intervention actions with confidence. These actions are implemented and evaluated in the second year of the project again with support from mentors available to each school principal.

The Pilot Research

Research during the PALL Pilot Project concentrates on the links between leadership action and learning and in this case, literacy. The Pilot Project has taken validated individual findings from meta-analytical research reviews defining school leaders' actions known to affect learning. It has drawn them together in a set of actions theorised as a framework or 'Blue Print'. It is this set of actions that is subject to the researcher's gaze. We believe that the project represents an important step in exploring the interaction between these actions and the impact they have on school leaders' perceptions of their capabilities and actual effects on student learning outcomes in literacy. We believe that this marks the Pilot Project as a point of departure from previous research in Australia and New Zealand. Documenting evidence of the effects of leadership actions applied systematically in the combination outlined in the Blue Print is one of the primary purposes of the pilot research. At the same time, the PALL Project is explicitly aimed at bringing together what in the past might have been seen as two disparate bodies of research – evidence about literacy and evidence about leadership. These come together in the Leadership for Literacy Learning Framework central to the project in a way that makes them readily apparent and accessible to school leaders.

The research agenda accompanying the second year of the project is designed to collect data on a range of matters such as perceptions of personal leadership capabilities held by principals at the beginning and end of the Pilot Project, changes in aspects of the school's way of working and reasons why the changes have occurred, a comparison of the views of teachers and principals about changes in literacy learning practices in their schools and the extent to which the Leadership for Learning Blue Print has influenced those changes, assessment of the extent to which shared knowledge of particular aspects of reading have been influential in improved teaching and learning for targeted students, and of course, improvements or otherwise in children's learning and achievement in aspects of reading in which interventions have been implemented. Having described a case where research efforts are being focused on finding out what happens when school principals and their teachers focus their actions systematically on learning, we outline a series of implications of a better understanding of the connections between leadership and learning.

Implications for Politicians, Policy Makers and School Leaders

In Australia, the emerging priority being given to understanding the links between leadership and learning has clear implications for policy makers and leadership practitioners. The commitment that governments in Australia and New Zealand are making to improve the quality of learning (though this is sometimes disguised or distorted by the drive for performance and accountability) leads directly to an acknowledgement of the need for quality teaching and quality school leadership.

Put simply, emerging from the review of literature we have presented in this chapter and from the PALL Pilot Project in particular, is the indisputable fact that it really matters what motivates school leaders. Unless the moral purpose of schooling and leadership is 'centre stage', 'closing the gap' is likely to remain no more than a mantra in low SES communities. The growing body of work on leadership for learning suggests the need to apply new knowledge and understanding to leadership and school improvement frameworks, leadership development programs, leadership support infrastructure and systemic change.

Leadership and School Improvement Frameworks

Both at national and state levels in Australia over the past decade, considerable attention has been devoted to the development of leadership frameworks – variously described as leadership standards, competencies or capabilities frameworks. In essence they are descriptions along with annotations of the types of leadership behaviours and characteristics upon which to judge the performance, guide the development and provide suggested developmental action areas for school leaders. A key national priority at present is the drawing up of an agreed national framework of leadership standards by the newly formed Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Investing this national leadership standards framework with 'leadership for learning' concepts would give impetus to and reflect our growing understanding about 'what matters' if leaders are to maximise their contribution in making a difference to student learning.

In school systems and sectors, there are school review procedures which espouse purposes related to school improvement. These procedures carry direct implications for and often specific references to how school leadership should be enacted. The 'tug of war' between complying with performance accountability criteria (efficiency measures) and pursuing broader leadership for learning criteria (effectiveness measures) influences the behaviours and priorities that school leaders emphasise. Taking a stance which reinforces the position that leadership for learning is and ought to be a potent driver for school improvement is a key task for policy makers. Running a heavy-handed accountability line at the expense of children's satisfaction and achievement in learning should not be tolerated.

Leadership Development Programs

We feel that there is now evidence of a discernible movement in the design of leadership development programs (of which PALL, IDEAS and RAISe are three examples we have cited). That movement is away from the provision of simple checklists of characteristics or 'what to dos' to be an effective leader. What is being seen is an approach which generates research-based frameworks such as the PALL

Leadership for Learning Blueprint or Robinson's (2007) Leadership Dimensions. These are accompanied by modes of reflection and dialogue to encourage closer examination by school leaders of school processes and the school context. This is designed to enhance capability and to engage teachers and leadership teams in collaborative school level problem solving that reaches into the classroom and places action squarely on the quality of student learning and performance. The approach brings school leadership into a direct but sophisticated relationship with classrooms, teachers and student learning. It involves an in-depth interrogation of what is happening, why and what must be done. It requires collaboration, motivation, diverse and distributed leadership roles and community engagement. As the interest and investment by governments in Australia and New Zealand in leadership quality gathers momentum (see Chaps. 13 and 37), the design of leadership development programs and links to ongoing support may well be critical variables in determining the effectiveness of that investment.

The PALL project we have referred to also brings together findings about effective leadership with evidence from aspects of research into literacy teaching and learning. Rather than studying leadership and literacy in isolation, what drives that project is a set of evidence-based positions that are deliberately linked together to explore the impact of the one on the other and their interplay with student learning. One of the oft repeated failures of professional development programs for teachers is that curriculum-focused initiatives which target individual teachers alone are known not to lead to sustained or sustainable improvement. The school, its context and culture and the role of leadership have often been missing elements. A *leadership for learning* perspective carries a clear message with the research evidence to suggest that coupling these things has a better chance of achieving much sought after sustainability.

Leadership Support Infrastructure

Our reading of the field says to us that there is a need for education systems to provide improved support infrastructure for school leaders. That support needs to be increasingly sophisticated yet accessible. The term 'infrastructure' is used here to convey a sense that the range of leadership roles and capabilities is widening and becoming more complex as leadership for learning becomes the centrepiece of what school leaders need to do. In part, what is required is to build 'ways of thinking' as well as the more practical 'ways of doing'. What is needed goes beyond mere check lists and toolkits to embrace the role of the intervention architect as well as role of the data analyst.

As a starting point, it is suggested that support infrastructure needs to be thought about in at least three ways: conceptual, technical and personal. First, at a conceptual level, courses for leaders or leadership programs should enable

aspiring and experienced leaders to refine and consolidate their thinking about leadership and its dimensions. In addition, the enhancement of the capacity of leadership associations, institutes and academic institutions – the service providers for school leaders – warrants further consideration in the light of the trends and developments we have discussed in this chapter.

Second, at a technical level, we make a clear call to systems to provide not only better quality data about learning and achievement but improved data analysis support for schools. This applies to 'hard' systemic data as well as to a range of good quality qualitative data. We are mindful of the observation made by Fullan et al. (2006) that systems need to be careful that they do not swamp schools with requirements for assessment against standards. An over supply of information will not necessarily assist the effort by leaders to focus their schools on improving learning as much as precise, diagnostically useful and 'practitioner' friendly data.

Third, at a personal level, mentorship and coaching are being recognised as important elements of infrastructural support, particularly in schools in very challenging circumstances. No matter the interpersonal capabilities of individual school leaders, there are times when all are in need of 'on demand' support and professional 'back up'. Support denied is a known contributor to leadership withdrawal. We have begun to appreciate this more keenly and have mentioned it already as a feature of the design of the PALL Pilot Project.

We argue that education systems and their policy makers need to think about these conceptual, technical and personal infrastructure supports as potential change levers, just as they can be employed by school leaders for local school change and development.

Having addressed a number of issues related to the implications of research into the links between leadership and learning, we turn now to the final section of the chapter where we put forward ideas for research which we believe will take us further in our understanding.

Research Frontiers: Questions for Further Research

We stated in the summary of our literature review for this chapter, that the empirical research base to inform the actions of school leaders in Australia and New Zealand, though growing, is somewhat limited. We were able however, to point to a consensus of views about critical leadership actions from studies Down Under, of subject teaching, theoretical writing, field research and research meta-analyses. In the PALL Pilot Project, we have used that consensus on leadership actions in the design and implementation of a Blue Print for school leaders to lead literacy learning in their schools. We acknowledge that this work is in its infancy but we believe that existing research knowledge linking leadership and learning gives us confidence that projects such as PALL will yield important new information on leadership practice. What we know at present is that some of the actions of school leaders have a stronger impact on

student learning than others. What we do not know is what combination of various discrete actions is most powerful. The PALL Pilot Project is an attempt to see what occurs when eight of the dimensions for action known to affect student learning are put into practice systematically and in a sense simultaneously, in the pursuit of improvements in literacy learning and student literacy achievement. Projects such as this beg many general and specific questions such as:

General Research Questions

In the light of the literature reviewed, we contend that future researchers keen to probe the links between leadership and learning need to consider:

- How *leadership* and *learning* are defined;
- How the links between leadership and learning are described, in terms of 'directness' and 'order (or level) of impact'; and
- How the links between leadership and learning may be strengthened, including the kinds of strategies to be employed to best practical effect.

Specific Research Questions

- How often do schools examine their moral purpose and how can this best be done if shared leadership is an agreed goal?
- What kinds of school structures facilitate shared leadership?
- What kinds of professional dialogue and what data are most useful in enabling teachers and school leaders to plan effective improvement strategies?
- How can curriculum management and coordination be best organised to guarantee the essential focus on student learning?
- How can the talents of parents and community members be harnessed in the leadership of learning?
- How can changing professional learning priorities be identified and addressed so that student learning and achievement are enhanced?
- What are the conditions of learning that are most conducive to effect student outcomes in particular school environments (e.g. low SES, high indigenous populations, significant numbers of migrants or refugees)?

In listing such frontiers for research, we are seeking not only to explore the 'how to' type questions but also to raise the question about what constitutes 'leadership content knowledge' – that is what content knowledge do school leaders need to have? In doing so, we see value in developing a similar construct to Schulman's (1986) 'pedagogical content knowledge' as it has been applied in teacher education but 'leadership content knowledge' as it applies to school leaders.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we are attracted to the work of Firestone and Riehl (2005) in which they describe 'a new agenda for research in educational leadership'. That agenda summarises the challenges we face in this field and the authors argue for a blend of comprehensive qualitative case studies and research designs with rigorous quantitative methods. We believe that the most recent studies of leadership in this region and the PALL research in particular, have the potential to take the field further through this blend. In summary, such approaches avoid the risk of researching leadership out of context, as an end it self, rather than as a means of making positive and meaningful difference to the lives and learning of others. In our view, blended research is well placed to serve the moral purpose of schooling.

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Chapter 12
A Developmental Framework
for Instructional Leadership

Ulrich C. Reitzug and Deborah L. West

Introduction

Instructional leadership has long been hailed as one of the most significant responsibilities of school principals. Although current newly hired principals often believe the responsibility for instructional leadership is a recent addition to principals' work, the emphasis on principal instructional leadership has been longstanding. Indeed, Beck and Murphy (1993) in their historical analysis of principalship literature affirm instructional leadership as the dominant topic of principal literature during the 1980s. Thus, although the emphasis on principal instructional leadership has been with us for a long time, the high-stakes instructional accountability environment spawned by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) may well be giving even more prominence to this role in the work of principals during the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Although there has been much advocacy for principal instructional leadership, we would argue that there has been far less explicit conceptualization of what instructional leadership encompasses. Indeed, recently a group of principal preparation students in one of our masters level classes commented that they were regularly told in their classes that as principals they must be instructional leaders, but that so far they had heard little about what that entailed.

We have, over the past 4 years, been interviewing principals about their work in this era of high-stakes accountability and NCLB. One of the dimensions of our work has been to try to decipher their instructional leadership practice. To date, we have interviewed 40 principals from 11 states. Our sample includes 26 female principals and 14 male principals. Twenty-three of our interviewees were elementary school principals, 6 were middle school principals, and 11 were high school principals. Our sample consisted of 27 Caucasian principals, 10 African American,

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1 Bahamian, 1 Native American, and 1 Hawaiian principal. All interviews were over an hour long, many around an hour and a half, and some as long as 2 hours. We have previously reported on earlier phases of our work (Reitzug et al. 2008; Reitzug and West 2009; West et al. 2010). In this chapter we pull together data from all 40 principals to present a developmental framework of instructional leadership.

An Instructional Leadership Framework

In order to remain as broadly encompassing as possible, we defined instructional leadership as simply "the way principals make a difference in learning, achievement, and instruction in their schools."

As we analyzed how principals talked about their work and how they perceived themselves to make a difference in their schools, we categorized their instructional leadership into *direct* and *indirect* forms. We termed the direct forms of instructional leadership as *linear, organic*, and *prophetic* and indirect forms were called *relational, empowering*, and *political* (see Fig. 12.1). While we were able to fairly easily discern most principals' dominant mode of instructional leadership, many also made references to practices that would fall under modes other than their dominant one, and several articulated significant influences from two or even three strands. We termed the latter hybrid conceptions of instructional leadership. In the sections that follow we describe the direct, indirect, and hybrid conceptions of instructional leadership.
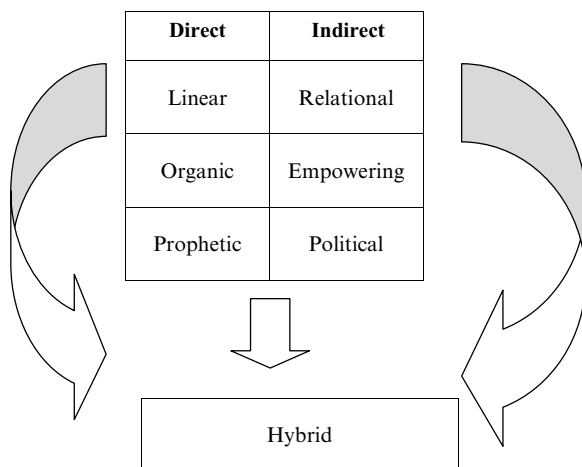
Fig. 12.1 Conceptions of instructional leadership

Direct Forms of Instructional Leadership

Linear Instructional Leadership

Linear instructional leadership is grounded in structural functionalist assumptions of rationality, linearity, and straight-line cause and effect (Burrell and Morgan 1979; Weick 1979). Such assumptions hold that systems can be designed so that one action, process, structure, or intervention will lead to a subsequent desired outcome, which will then lead to the next desired outcome and so on down a causal chain. In addition, the system can be carefully monitored and feedback loops can be implemented so that all aspects of the system remain in compliance with what has been designed and is desired (Weick 1979).

Principals holding linear conceptions of instructional leadership described processes in which teachers and other certified school staff align standards, curriculum documents, pacing guides, learning objectives, instruction, benchmark assessment, re-teaching, and test data[1] (see Fig. 12.2). One principal described the process in her school in the following way.

> The state has now proposed content standards. In our district, we have already aligned our curriculum with national standards. It's an ongoing process. The teachers are very involved in that process. Once we aligned those, we selected our essential objectives in each grade level and created criterion-referenced tests to determine whether our students were mastering our curriculum. That took a lot of work—a whole year to write the assessments. Right now we're starting to look at the data from those.

Another principal explained:

> The goal is to make sure that there's a tight alignment between the written, formal curriculum documents, the delivered instruction, and then the assessed instruction… Once we benchmark, we have the discussion about what worked, what didn't work, and we look back, and we re-teach what the students didn't master. It's a continuous cycle.

The two most prevalent dimensions of linear instructional leadership described by the principals consisted of (a) various alignment processes and (b) the analysis of data to further align instruction with identified student academic deficiencies. One principal described her "job" as follows:

> My job of taking them to the next level is focusing on those curriculum objectives and making sure those objectives are taught so there's that alignment between what is being taught and what is being tested and not just doing their favorite lesson on apples and all these wonderful hands-on activities with apples…

Another principal, in discussing what she had done to increase test scores in her school which had been a low-performing school when she arrived 2 years ago, said,

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[1]For a critique of many of these practices, see Reitzug et al. (2008).

Fig. 12.2 A graphic depiction of linear instructional leadership

HIGHER TEST SCORES

Reteaching

Reviewing test data

Benchmark testing

Teaching according to
Curriculum maps/Pacing guides

Developing Curriculum maps/
Pacing guides

Standards &
Curriculum Documents

Alignment Processes

LINEAR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
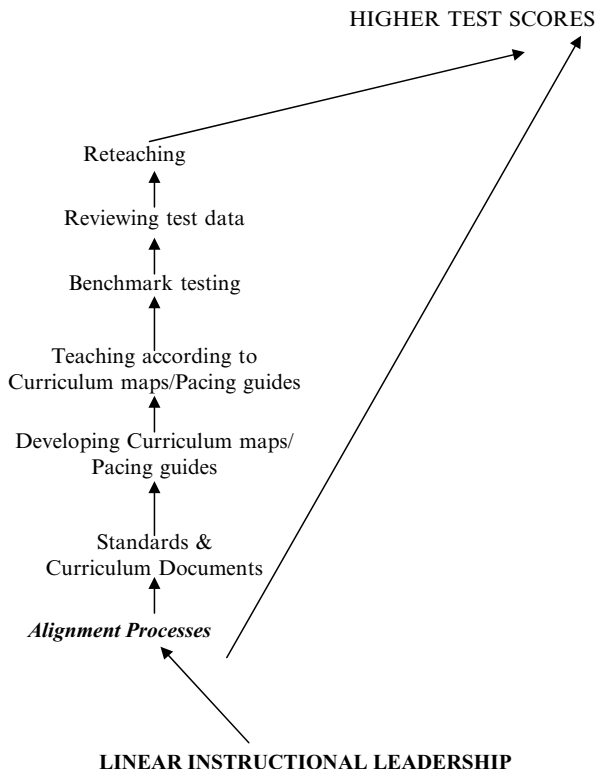
> We made a huge impact just by focusing instruction and getting it aligned with the standard course of study, real basic-level curricular alignment, really focusing instruction and getting the teachers to plan together and bringing some sense of collegiality together.

The alignment process also extended into the classroom, as described in the following.

> When I walk in your classroom, I expect to see…..an essential question on the board that tells me what…you're teaching that day. I expect to see a lesson plan…. what your strategies are… and you hold people accountable for them. We do lesson plan checks, and we do walk-throughs, and we give them feedback…I think you have to communicate what it is you expect, and then you have to—another principal told me you have to inspect what you expect.

The use and analysis of data was a key component of the alignment cycle. Indeed, the majority of the interviewed principals discussed the use of data to "drive instruction." One principal described it as follows.

> We have pacing guides that are from the county, and we have the Standard Course of Study [the state's curriculum document] you have to teach, but you know what you need to reteach and who it needs to be re-taught to—you know—benchmarks. We have quarterly benchmarks. We just got that data in, and it's like a mini EOG at the end of each quarter.

> It will tell you literally the percentage of children and what questions they missed. Like we were able to look up, I think it was 45 questions on reading, third grade, and we had two questions that zero percent of the children got right. So we knew those two questions we needed to explicitly explore and figure out why every single kid messed up on it. So the teachers can evaluate those questions and how they're teaching, question stems, how they can form their own story questions based on the question stems. I would say it's really driving instruction.

Another principal echoed:

> We just finished with the benchmark testing…It's like to prepare them for the end-of-grade test. They are a test in an end-of-grade-test-like form on what the teacher was supposed to teach that quarter. So we just finished with that. I've been looking online to get these reports from it. I've been looking to see how well the kids do in reading, how well these kids do in math, if we have them in the right reading group or if they're in the right math group. What kind of remediation are we going to provide? What are the objectives that they're not getting? Is it across the board? Or is it just this teacher? I mean, it's a lot.

One principal cited the increasing use of quantitative data and noted implications for the skills needed by principals. She noted,

> You've got to be a statistician to be a principal now. Three different spreadsheets this week. A new Scantron achievement series website that takes your benchmark, ordered data and it does it by item, and it does it by student, and it does it by grade-level, and by teacher, and you sort the percentages attained, and then you meet with your grade-level and decide what your action plan's going to be for the next nine weeks. Learning how to manipulate all of that data and the websites so that's it's meaningful. Three new programs this year like that.

Another principal summed up how dominating the use and analysis of quantitative data has become in schools and its importance for his role as principal. "Everything has a number to it… I have to make sure all those numbers are increasing, that the trend is upward on all pieces of data except for things like suspension rates."

In summary, many principals described the way they attempt to impact instructional improvement in their schools in terms of linear processes such as the ones described. The linear conception of instructional leadership is graphically depicted in Fig. 12.2.

Organic Instructional Leadership

Organic instructional leadership is based on the premise that the instructional dimension of schools is part of a larger whole – a living organism of sorts. Unlike linear instructional leadership, which segments and isolates components of the instructional program and then systematically attempts to align those components, organic instructional leadership presumes that instructional components cannot be addressed in isolation from the larger whole. For organic instructional leadership there is not necessarily a definitive starting point, such as content standards, but rather it starts with the examination and discussion of whatever issues emerge as

most pressing. The assumption that undergirds organic instructional leadership is that instructional improvement occurs as a result of the ongoing learning of teachers and other school personnel about their individual practice and the school's overall practice. One principal described it as follows:

> Folks here need to be driving their instruction. They need to take the ownership. It needs to come from them…You guys are the leaders, you have to look at the instruction. … if you come to me and you ask me a question, I'll ask you a question back about what you think the options are and what you think…You get them thinking and trusting and asking and growing across the board. So to me, setting up a stage where people can do that is the most important thing… When I start hearing myself in my head go, 'Oh, my gosh. Not that too.' Then I know that we're there, that the ideas are coming, the teachers are wanting to do this, the teachers are wanting to do that. They've got an idea for this. They've got an idea for that. And I can't keep up.

Another principal shared:

> Now that all these questions are coming up about curriculum and assessment and mastery learning, now they're saying, "Gosh, we need time to really talk about this". So now we're in the process of getting them release time, substitutes, and getting our [teaching] assistants to fill in for them in two-hour blocks. We really are turning into a learning community….I think once the data was shared it caused us all to start asking questions….[It] is my belief that that's the direction we should be going in, learning from each other and not just closing our door and teaching, but that we've got to share.

A third principal noted:

> Then by the end of Year Two, we started becoming, in my opinion, a true professional community of learning… [we started] doing walk-throughs and visiting [each others'] classrooms. What we did is we had a walk-through schedule, and the teachers literally went in with partners and talked through things. They weren't allowed to talk about what they didn't see happening, but what they saw happening. They had to stick to the observation and what you observed… They're sharing with each other. They're really boosting each other. That developed a lot of trust.

Organic instructional leadership is consistent with the literature on professional learning community (e.g., DuFour and Eaker 1998; Hord 1997; Huffman and Hipp 2003; Kruse et al. 1995; Morrissey 2000; Newmann and Associates 1996; Schussler 2003), building leadership capacity (Lambert 1998, 2003), embedded professional development (Lieberman 1995; Reitzug 2002; Sparks and Hirsh 2000), and constructivist notions of instructional leadership (Lambert et al. 2002). These literatures essentially argue that schools should be centers of inquiry and discourse (see also Joyce et al. 1999; Schaefer 1967; Sirotnik 1989) and that the principal's instructional leadership role involves stimulating and facilitating these processes (see also Reitzug 1994, 1997). In these schools, there is extensive shared discussion and work among teachers and other school staff. Specifically, these schools are characterized by the deprivatization of practice; frequent and sustained dialogue focused on pedagogy and school practice; continuous improvement resulting from ongoing inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and experimentation; and frequent and mutual observation and critique of teaching (Kruse et al. 1995; Little 1982; Meier 1995).

Fig. 12.3 A graphic depiction of organic instructional leadership
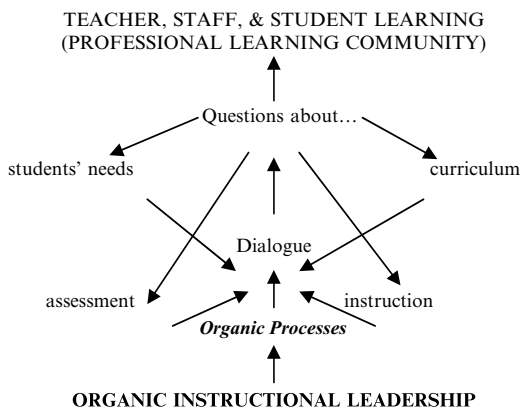
Principals embracing organic instructional leadership described a number of ways in which they stimulate collaborative inquiry and discourse in their schools, including peer walk-throughs of each others' classrooms coupled with follow-up discussion, team-based issue study, action research projects, reviewing research on issues impacting the school, analyzing and discussing school data, grade-level curriculum discussions, team lesson planning, and the principal posing practice-related questions. Figure 12.3 provides a graphic depiction of organic instructional leadership.

Prophetic Instructional Leadership

Prophetic instructional leadership is essentially about leading a school from a critical moral center that is grounded in considerations of what it means to truly educate students. Prophetic leadership is in sharp contrast to instructional "leadership" that is reactive to local political pressures and nationally legislated goals that strive for school effectiveness measured in narrow test score-based outcomes. Prophetic instructional leadership starts with students and their immediate and long-term well-being and contribution to our world, rather than with how the school can most effectively satisfy the dictates of legislation and political pressures. It is about clarifying the type of education that leads to student and societal well-being, identifying the values and beliefs that are foundational in this type of education, and then leading in ways that raise awareness about the "discrepancies between what we value and what we actually do" (Purpel 1989, p. 80). In our current educational climate, prophetic instructional leadership means exercising moral leadership (Sergiovanni 1996) to identify and pursue educational purposes and a school vision that goes beyond simply achieving higher test scores. The principal who most clearly and

consistently articulated a prophetic conception of instructional leadership talked about her practice as follows.

> I think administrators should be prophets… A prophet pulls everyone in together with a purpose. The "people" have to be called into another vision, into another more just "possibility" for action/existence. [A prophet] needs to nudge the individual and collective consciousness and consciences of a people so that there is always a discomfort with the status quo.

She went on to provide several examples of the types of questions and issues that are posed and discussed when instructional leadership is grounded in a prophetic conception:

> We had to start talking about what we believed in…what is it that's right to be learned—and not just the state curriculum? We started talking about, 'Is this good for kids, and in what ways? Is this curriculum good? Is this book good? Is this method good? Will this strategy work? Will it make kids feel more connected? Will it create peaceful relationships among kids and teachers? Will this make for a more positive school climate?'…It was a given that we did the state curriculum. What over and above do we do that promotes what we want in the school? And even in our discipline policy, we tried to make everything we did a learning kind of situation that could build community and make kids connected to and value what we were doing in school. We talked a lot about the dignity of children…

Principals operating from a prophetic conception do not, however, simply critique political and legislative mandates, find them wanting, and ignore them. Rather, they insure that these do not become the driving force for the school's practice and that the school's practice moves beyond what is politically or legislatively required. Our principal observed:

> I don't think [testing] should be the main focus of schools. Quite frankly, I'm opposed to it. But I do work for that system and I do want to do my work, so I think you give Caesar what's due Caesar and you do what you know is right. I'd much rather people be stressed out over making sure kids learn what they know is the right thing to learn, rather than being stressed out over test scores. If we could ever get to where we just operated on that, all the other things would take care of themselves… I like to say, "Forget the curriculum, and tell me what you think third-graders need to know. What do they really need to know? Make a list for me. Hash it out. Then look at the state curriculum. Where can you put it in? What's left? What are the odds they really need to know that?"

Examples of the type of critique that characterizes a prophetic conception of instructional leadership were also provided by several (albeit, not many) principals. One observed,

> What we have at [our school] is an integrated school but segregated classrooms. I could walk down the hall and see an AP [Advanced Placement] honors class, and I'd walk down the other side of hall…and I'd see a regular class, and there was a split [i.e., along racial lines]. I'd say, "Why is that?" So part of our push is to get more kids to believe that they could excel, to take some pre-AP classes, and get more minority kids to get into the regular academic classes. That was a big deal, and that takes a mindset change because AP teachers want only the best kids so they can get these good scores.

Another principal opined,

> I am interested in helping correct some of the problems that we are creating for ourselves with all the data. The data's great. I think we all should be accountable, but we shouldn't be continuously using this data to beat kids down, and that's what's happening with it all.

   The grounding for the prophetic conception of instructional leadership is the theological literature on the prophetic tradition. Purpel (1989) notes that the prophets had a keen awareness of "divine imperatives" and were analysts and critics of the ways in which society was, and was not, acting consistently with these divine imperatives. He observes that they "were passionate social critics who applied sacred criteria to human conduct and, when they found violations of these criteria, they cried out in anguish and outrage" (p. 80). The implication for principals embodying a prophetic conception of instructional leadership is that it is not simply enough to accept the federal government's, state department of public instruction's, or local school district's vision for schooling. Rather, a principal who is a prophetic instructional leader must work with the school community to examine taken for-granted assumptions about the purposes of education and schooling and the exter-nally imposed mandates that attempt to reify such purposes. What is the purpose of schools? Is it simply to attain high test scores? What does it meant to be educated? Is it simply being able to do well on a test? The principal must then engage the school community in critiquing curriculum, instructional practices, and school policies for congruence with the values and beliefs the school community has determined are "sacred" to them, and to develop alternative policies and practices as needed. Figure 12.4 provides a graphic illustration of prophetic instructional leadership.

EDUCATIVE COMMUNITY GROUNDED IN MORAL PURPOSE
(Student, Teacher, & Staff Learning)

Raising questions of
purpose & practice

- What's right to be learned?
- Will it protect the dignity of children?
- Will it help people feel connected?
- Will it create peaceful rela-tionships?

Nudging consciousness
& consciences

Calling people into another vision

PROPHETIC INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
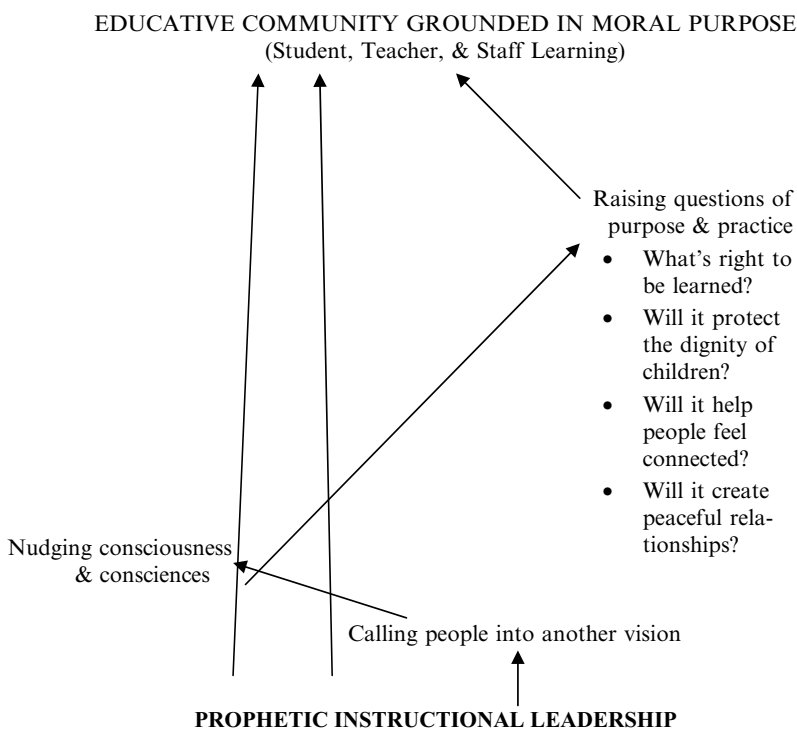
Fig. 12.4   A graphic depiction of prophetic instructional leadership

Indirect Conceptions of Instructional Leadership

In indirect conceptions of instructional leadership, increased learning and improvement in learning and instruction does not occur as a result of principals working directly with the instructional program but rather as a by-product of their actions and leadership in other arenas. We termed the three forms of indirect instructional leadership articulated by our principals, *relational, empowering,* and *political.*

Relational Instructional Leadership

The assumption grounding relational instructional leadership is that increased learning and improvement in instruction occurs as a by-product of the relationship building actions of the principal – specifically, the principal's efforts to help students and faculty feel better about themselves and thus try harder and take more pride in their work. For many of our principals, the relational conception of instructional leadership was dominant as they discussed their praxis. These principals clearly described the connection that they saw between building positive relationships and student success. One principal described it as follows:

> Before we can ever teach kids, before we can ever help kids and help schools, it boils down to relationships. I think it's the biggest thing as a leader. I think it's the biggest thing as a teacher. I think it's the biggest thing as a counselor. I think it's the biggest thing as a front office person, a housekeeper…it's all about relationships… As far as test scores and that kind of political stuff, I really stay out of it. My belief is that if you're doing what's best for kids and they feel good about themselves and you're working on their issues and keeping them in school—I feel that kind of stuff is going to be fine. If you create a culture where kids feel loved, all that other stuff will work out.

Another principal echoed this sentiment in slightly different words:

> No matter what the condition or circumstance that a kid may have—if the kid has a disability or if the kid comes from poverty or whatever—that's not the biggest factor in whether or not they're going to be successful. The biggest factor that I believe and that my staff has adopted is that the teacher-student relationship is *the* most important factor on whether or not a kid is going to be successful.

However, one principal was also adamant in pointing out that caring for students and holding a relational approach toward them did not mean that students could do whatever they wanted or that there were no expectations for students. Although her interview was characterized by a passionate concern for the well-being of students, she also embraced high expectations, no excuses approach toward them. She explained,

> If you don't show up, we are calling your house. They know I will come to your house in a minute—no questions asked. And like one of them, she said, "I live in the projects," and I said, "I've been to the projects before and…? Go home and change your shirt and come back." She came back.

She continued,

> Every child can learn, and you take the children that you have, not the children that you used to have, not the children that you want, not the children that you've ordered—because these are our children. You need to take that child and … make that child yours.

The principals were also clear that building relationships was important not just with students, but also with teachers and other members of the school community. One principal said,

> Although my joy really comes from kids, it's my responsibility to make sure my teachers are OK to help the kids… Like this morning, my English Department head is really depressed right now. I'm really watching her. And the young teacher next door is shaky because her boyfriend is out of a job right now and might leave. You've got to know your people. So I just take a check. "Hey, how ya doin'? What's goin' on? Did you have a good weekend?" If someone's having a hard time, then I hang out.

Another principal described the importance of developing strong relationships with members of the school community.

> I can't do anything without establishing relationships. I can't. I could be the smartest person in the gosh-darn world and have the best resources, but that [is not important] unless I'm establishing a relationship of trust and respect and friendliness…. That is what I'm taking the most time out of my schedule right now with is making sure that I'm having the dialog. I've got to have the dialog one-on-one.

Embedded in the principals' narratives are descriptions of various ways in which they build relationships. This includes spending time with students in school and out of school; soliciting, listening to, and knowing their stories; being an advocate for disenfranchised students; counseling both students and teachers; and making sure that teachers are "OK" (i.e., mentally, emotionally, and physically healthy) so that they can help students.

Figure 12.5 provides a graphic illustration of how principals described relational instructional leadership.

Empowering Instructional Leadership

Closely related to the relational way of viewing instructional leadership is a second indirect way to impact learning and instruction, the empowering conception of instructional leadership. In empowering instructional leadership, increased learning and improvement in instruction occur as a by-product of empowering teachers, helping them realize their strengths and capabilities, and giving them opportunities to utilize their strengths to make a difference with students. One principal described it as follows.

> How do I help them get to be the person they want to be—to be the teacher they want to be? That's what's really important for me. Everybody has got something special about them, and my role is to make sure that I can bring that out the best way it can come out. And so I want to inspire people to be the best they can. You know if you go to an orchestra,

BETTER SELF CONCEPT
(Increased Student Learning,
Higher Test Scores)

High expectations & No excuses approach

Spending time with students, in & out
of school

Counseling students & teachers

Listening to students' stories

Building Relationships

Keeping kids in school

Making sure teachers are "ok"

Reinterpreting rules for students' benefit

Being an advocate for disenfranchised students

RELATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Fig. 12.5 A graphic depiction of relational instructional leadership

> who gets a lot of attention? It's the conductor that gets all this attention. But he doesn't make music—he really doesn't. He throws his arms around, but he doesn't really make any music. But what he does do is he brings out the best in the orchestra.

This principal later elaborated on one way he acts on his beliefs.

> What I try to do is I try to listen to what they say. I turn around when they are asking me something specifically, and rather than saying "no I can't do that" or "no I'm not gonna get that," you turn around and you say, "How could we accomplish that with what you're asking? How could we accomplish that?"…I think probably the thing that has helped me is to believe enough in people to have them help with the responsibility of doing things. Whether it's discipline, like an ad-hoc group that works quickly together and stuff; whether it's curriculum—be able to pull some people and say, "Let's get together and work on this," and believe in them enough to know that they will create it…

Other principals also articulated empowering perspectives focused on bringing out the best in others. One principal observed, "I personally believe that I'm here to serve… I'm big on empowering other folks and helping them as they're helping kids grow – that's a part of their development." Another principal explained, "Leadership is usually pretty quiet. It empowers the people to do what they need to do, and so I feel like I am more of a facilitator than I am being out in front of the parade kind of a thing."

Some principals, however, used the term empowerment in a somewhat different way. These principals equated empowerment with the involvement of teachers in decision making. One noted,

> When I came to this school, they were very used to top-down decision making. I've empowered my leadership team. They're the ones who have created the handbooks of the procedures here at the school: what we expect in teachers, what we expect in kids, what we expect in parents.

Another echoed:

> For me empowerment is really important and that's what it should be about. I came to a school that was micro-managed. Everything went through the principal here. Every decision was made by the principal. I'm not saying that I don't oversee those decisions but I think that empowerment piece is very important.

One principal elaborated on one of the grounding factors for his embrace of empowerment:

> I want people to disagree with me and tell me why they think something's different because maybe they see something I don't because they are out there all the time, where I'm not in there all the time in their specific classrooms. "I may be in there for 10 minutes, but you're in there three periods out of the day, so you tell me." …I think they like the empowerment they have because they're making decisions.

Figure 12.6 illustrates how principals empower teachers to "be the person they want to be."
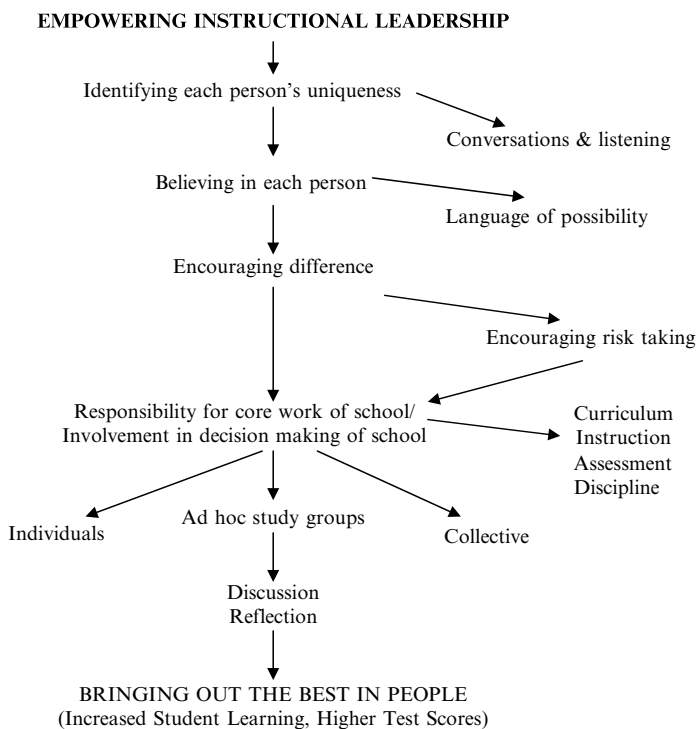
Fig. 12.6   A graphic depiction of empowering instructional leadership

By listening, conversing, and observing teachers, they try to bring out each teacher's strengths. They make efforts to identify each person's uniqueness and encourage them to embrace their identity and to be different. Principals embracing an empowering conception of instructional leadership show that they believe in their teachers by using a language of possibility with them and encouraging them to take risks. They involve them in decision making and the core work of the school, including development work in curriculum and instruction, assessment, and discipline. They accomplish this through structures such as ad hoc groups, as well as through collective schoolwide work that engage teachers in reflection and discussion. The outcome they hope to achieve is to bring out the best in teachers, which in turn helps teachers to bring out the best in students.

Both relational and empowering instructional leadership are grounded in psychological and human relations literature and are based on findings from studies having to do with concepts such as self-efficacy, self-concept, and motivation. They fall into what Bolman and Deal (2003) term the "human resources frame" (p. 121). The work of Argyris (1957), Beck (1994), Gilligan (1982), Herzberg (1966), Maslow (1954), McGregor (1960), Noddings (1984), and many others provides the grounding for the human resources perspective. Key ideas include viewing organizations as extended families and communities and working with people in a manner that helps them to feel good about what they are doing. Essentially, the human resources perspective involves matching the needs of individuals with the needs of the organization (Bolman and Deal 2003). Additionally, empowering instructional leadership could be argued to be grounded in the literatures on democracy in education (see e.g., Dewey 1916/1997) and participative and school-based decision making (Malen et al. 1991; Reitzug and Capper 1996).

Political Instructional Leadership

A third indirect conception of instructional leadership is the political conception. In political instructional leadership, increased learning and improvement in instruction occurs as a by-product of the resources the principal is able to proactively acquire for the school. The added resources make it possible for the school to provide services and opportunities for students and teachers that would not be possible with a lesser amount of resources. In the extended quote below, one principal describes various aspects of her political instructional leadership.

> The frustration is trying to find…"How do I find the services for you?" I make a nuisance of myself, sometimes when I want things. They call me "Hurricane Smith." But, I can call up and say, "Look, I need a favor." I always need a favor. And I can usually, you know, get it. I think it's a relationship that you need to cultivate. If you are going to sit down and say, "I don't need your help, this is mine, this is mine," and then turn around and go when I need it—no, it's a two way street. Like, if they call and say, "Do you have such and such?" Or

"Can you do such and such for me?" I do it because they know pay back day is coming one day because I'm going to call in that favor. … I apply for everything, everything that comes through, we apply for. And some people will say, "If you didn't apply for it, it wasn't published." Some schools prefer to stand alone. I don't think that with the population that I have and the high poverty I have, I can afford that luxury. I have to look at what I have to work with, and I have to make sure that they have every access to everything that every other child has. I know what I'm dealing with, and I know I have high poverty. I have to go out and beg most of the things I get. "Just tell me what you need, if I have to call in every dignitary, or go sit on somebody's doorstep, so be it." And I have to look at the fact that when we opened, we had 97% free and reduced lunch. I couldn't go to those parents and say, "Can you give me an extra $10?" I had to find ways in order to get it. And that's why I say to the parents, "I can't get a grant to pay the child's health insurance. If you pay that, I will work on getting the field trip." You know? It's called negotiation, and it's a two way street.

Other principals similarly cited the importance of acquiring additional resources for their schools. One noted,

[A] priority is to always be sensitive to what the teachers need to be successful because if they don't have the resources they need, if they don't have the support they need, then they can't give the students those same things.

Another principal said she asked her teachers, "What are our issues? What is it that we want to do?" and after they researched ideas she told them "We can go and look for resources, we can get books, we can get people to come in. You tell me. I've got the money. I will do whatever." Other principals said things such as, "My job is to help make that happen and make sure they have the resources" and "You just fight for your school to try to bring the resources home." Interestingly enough, many principals who did not cite proactive efforts to acquire additional resources for their schools cited inadequate resources as one of the biggest obstacles and frustrations they experienced in their work.

Politics has been described as the competition for scarce resources. Political processes needed to be successful in this competition include bargaining, negotiation, and the formation of coalitions (Bolman and Deal 2003). Figure 12.7 illustrates a political orientation to making a difference in the lives and instruction of students. Principals whose practice is grounded in this conception see their primary role as acquiring resources so that necessary services and opportunities can be provided that will facilitate student learning and achievement.

In order to do this, principals must first strive to understand the needs of students and how these translate into services and opportunities the school must provide and create. Because services and opportunities typically come with a price tag, principals embracing this orientation to instructional leadership must form coalitions ("I think it's a relationship that you need to cultivate…"), trade favors ("I do it because they know pay back day is coming one day because I'm going to call in that favor…"), proactively seek out resources ("I apply for everything, everything that comes through, we apply for…"), and negotiate ("I can't get a grant to pay the child's health insurance. If you pay that, I will work on getting the field trip.").

POLITICAL INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Understanding students & school needs

Identifying what resources, services & opportunities are needed

Acquiring resources

Cultivating relationships
with potential resource providers

Seeking opportunities
& exposing students to them

Give & take negotiating

MORE & ENHANCED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
(Increased Student Learning & Achievement)
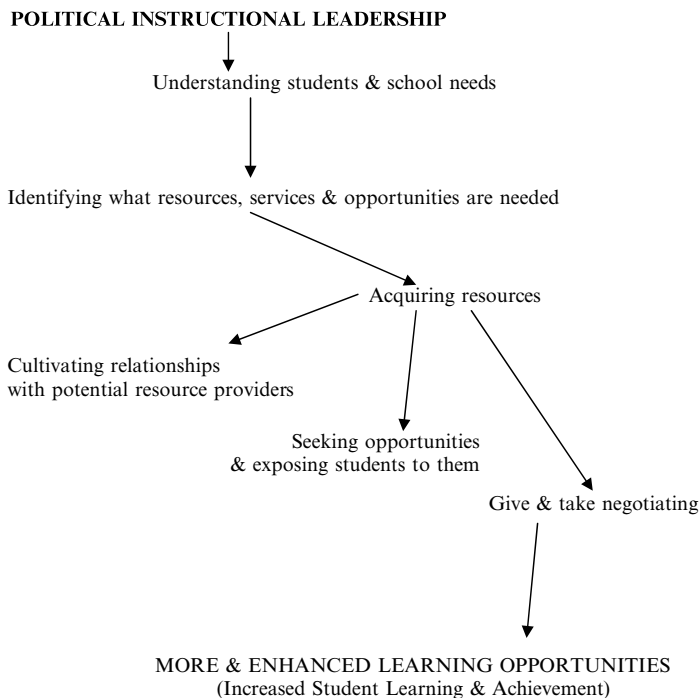
Fig. 12.7 A graphic depiction of political instructional leadership

Discussion: All or One?

While the natural inclination of holistically minded educators might argue that all of the conceptions of instructional leadership described in this chapter are important and principals should simply practice all of them, the real world argues differently. Theoretically, all conceptions may have some value; realistically, choices must be made. Given the overwhelming responsibilities of principals, there is simply too little time to effectively practice in all of these ways effectively. Additionally, emphasizing everything dilutes the emphasis such that, in actuality, nothing is emphasized. Even were it possible to give great attention to each of the six forms of instructional leadership in one's work as a principal, conceptually, some of the forms may be in conflict with each other. For example, adopting a linear perspective on curriculum alignment renders organic discussions of what constitutes authentic curriculum moot. In other instances, instructional leadership conceptions may be ideologically incongruent with each other. For example, the prophetic conception's focus on critiquing the status quo norms of schooling and "calling people into another vision" is inconsistent with devoting significant amounts of time to alignment processes that honor and reify the status quo vision of a reductionist curriculum.

It is, however, possible for principals to adopt a hybrid conception of instructional leadership that embraces two and perhaps, even three of these conceptions. For example, many of the principals spoke in highly relational ways about their work with students and teachers all the while also emphasizing one of the other conceptions. For those holding a relational and a linear approach, one might argue that their linear curriculum and instruction alignment actions displace their caring for students. That is, such practices may result in instructional practices that lead to mind-numbing education for students. A potent example of a hybrid conception of instructional leadership was articulated (Fig. 12.8) by one principal as she clearly and coherently described blended linear and organic processes. She explained,

> I took my two instructional coaches and had them develop from the standards then filter through the districts portal, then filter through the school calendar, an instructional calendar that really took the thought process out of, "Okay, what do we teach?" So, we knew what to teach. What we began doing last year was talking how to teach it, sharing our ideas and collaborating. We said, "Okay, this is the destination, this is proficient, here is your assessment, here is the common assessment, you go out and you get to that destination however you choose professionally. We'd love for you to share ideas if you have some and we'd certainly help you, but this is where we're going."

Figure 12.8 illustrates the two strands of this principal's linear-organic hybrid conception of instructional leadership. The linear strand revolves around the question of "*What* do we teach?" It commences with standards, which are made specific through the local curriculum document ("district portals") which is then

LINEAR–ORGANIC HYBRID INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
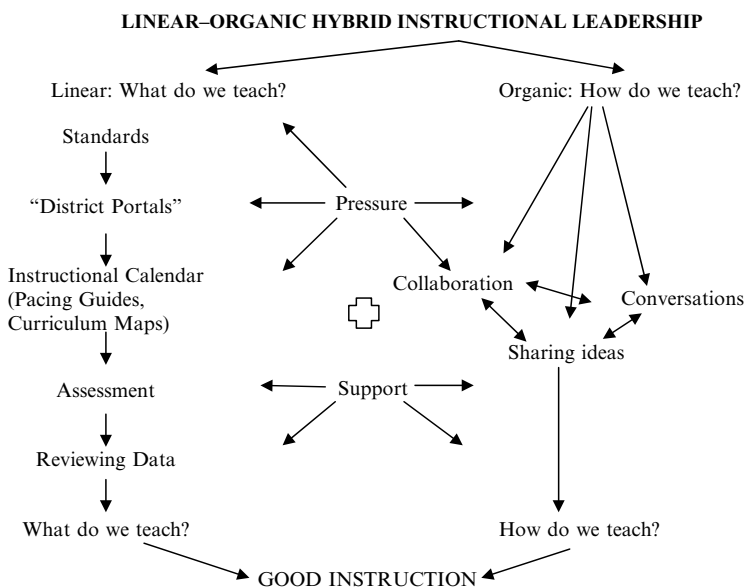
Fig. 12.8 A graphic depiction of one hybrid form of instructional leadership

aligned with specific dates by which content must be taught (i.e., an "instructional calendar" – also referred to as curriculum maps and pacing guides by other principals). At various dates, benchmark assessments occur and the data from these are studied to determine what needs to be re-taught. By contrast, the organic strand revolves around the question of, "*How* do we teach?" and involves dialog, sharing ideas, and collaboration.

Discussion

The narratives of the principals in this study suggest multiple ways to view instructional leadership, thus moving beyond the unitary conception of instructional leadership that has dominated past literature (see Table 12.1).

The six forms of instructional leadership described in this chapter are certainly not the only ways principals might view and practice their instructional leadership. For example, over the years we have heard many principals say that the way they support and improve instruction in their school is by ensuring that the school is running smoothly and that teachers have the books, equipment, and supplies they need to teach effectively. This managerial conception of their role is an indirect form of instructional leadership and has a long tradition in the literature and practice of school administration. Thus, the contribution of this chapter is to move us past a unitary conception of instructional leadership – not to identify all forms of instructional leadership.

Linear instructional leadership is the form of instructional leadership that is most directly and pervasively reactive to the high-stakes accountability environment of the early years of the twenty-first century. Based on anecdotal evidence, the current high-stakes accountability environment has seemed to move instructional leadership from its rhetorical dominance in the principalship literature for several decades (but relative absence in principals' practice) to the forefront of many principals' practice. However, it seems that the instructional leadership practice of many principals has not moved beyond emphasizing the importance of test scores and aligning standards, curriculum, teaching, and assessment. While, on the surface, this is a seductively logical approach to improving achievement, upon deeper analysis it is fraught with danger. Similar to the erroneous assumption that higher test scores mean students have learned more, linear alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is based on the assumption that greater alignment results in better teaching and higher test scores. However, a school's higher test scores do not mean students have learned more; they simply mean that the school has attained higher test scores, sometimes due to the crafty manipulation of other variables in the school. Similarly, greater alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment simply means that tested content has been more efficiently delivered – it has nothing to do with the *effectiveness* of the instruction, the *engagement* of students in their own learning, or the significance of what has been taught and tested.

Table 12.1 Forms of instructional leadership

Form of instructional leadership	Description and processes	Goals
Linear	Leading the alignment of standards, curriculum documents, pacing guides, learning objectives, instruction, benchmark assessment, teaching and re-teaching, and test data	Higher test scores
Organic	Leading the school in a manner that stimulates and facilitates discourse and inquiry to promote the ongoing learning of teachers and other school personnel about their individual practice and the school's overall practice	Teacher, staff, and student learning resulting in increased learning and higher test scores
Prophetic	Leading a school in a way that identifies a critical moral center for the school that is (a) grounded in considerations of what it means to truly educate students, (b) clarifies the type of education that leads to student and societal well-being, and (c) challenges status quo politicized notions of education	An educative community grounded in moral purpose resulting in more learning that matters (and higher test scores)
Relational	Leading the school in a way that helps students and faculty feel better about themselves and thus try harder and take more pride in their work	Better self-concept (resulting in more learning and higher test scores)
Empowering	Leading in a way that helps teachers realize their strengths and capabilities, and gives them opportunities to utilize them to make a difference with students	Bringing out the best in teachers resulting in improvement in instruction, increased student learning, and higher test scores
Political	Leading in a way that proactively acquires resources for the school which make it possible for the school to provide services and opportunities for students and teachers that would not be possible with a lesser amount of resources	Enhanced learning opportunities resulting in increased student learning and higher test scores

Conclusion

It was not the purpose of this study to correlate different forms of principal instructional leadership with higher test scores or other instructional outcomes. Thus, arguing for a "best" form of instructional leadership would be ungrounded. Previous research has argued (e.g., Dwyer et al. 1987; Krug 1992) that there is a correlation between principals' overarching perspectives of their work and their effectiveness. Perhaps the conceptions of instructional leadership discussed in this study can aid current and future principals as they reflect on how their practice

supports the learning of the students and teachers in their school, which conceptions their practices suggest, and whether this is congruent with how they would ideally like to be instructional leaders.

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Part III
System and Policy Issues on Leadership for Learning

Chapter 13
Quality and Accountability: Policy Tensions for Australian School Leaders

Sue Thomas and Louise Watson

Introduction

This chapter examines the changing relationship between national policy and educational leadership in Australian schools. It is underpinned by an understanding that leadership is not achieved in a social vacuum but is best understood in the context of its wider cultural setting (cf. Bell and Rowley 2002; Collard 2004; Spillane et al. 2004). As Grace (2000) notes, the leadership–society relation defines what it is to be an educational leader. In other words, the realisation of educational leadership is always set within a framework of possibilities and constraints derived from the cultural, political and economic contexts of education. The educational policies framed within these contexts define what school leadership is at any given point in time (Ball 1994). In Australia, school leadership has been shaped by a fluid and somewhat contested policy environment characterised by increasingly insistent demands for higher levels of quality and accountability from schools.

The Australian policy field, like that of many countries, has been influenced by a global policy consensus that rationalises public investment in education in economic terms. Education is portrayed as a means of building human capital and thus enhancing a nation's international competitiveness in the global economy (Henry et al. 2001; Lingard et al. 2002, 2005). The policy adoption of human capital theory as the *raison d'etre* for public investment in education fuels an instrumental conception of schooling as a tool for producing effective workers who can successfully compete in global markets (Hoffman and Burrello 2004). Australian education policy documents now typically begin with an economic policy justification such as 'reform in the way education and training is delivered is critical to driving our future productivity' (Council of Australian Governments 2008, no page).

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Although human capital theory offers a powerful justification for increasing public investment in education, this new economic paradigm has brought with it a heightened scrutiny of the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and educational leadership, and a concern to measure the productivity of school education systems. These developments are also attributed to the influence of neoliberalism on education policy where the dominant discourse has shifted away from administration and policy to an emphasis on management, sometimes called managerialism (Peters et al. 2000). Within this managerialist paradigm, policymakers are obliged to direct their energies towards improving the quality of school education, as a means of achieving the government's economic and social policy goals. Managerialism has also ushered in a broad policy agenda that legitimates competition between service providers and embraces the role of markets in the delivery of government services, such as education. School leaders now work under conditions where their governance is legitimated by a rationality defined by the market (Thomson 2004; Moos 2003). Under these neoliberal influences, Australian school leaders are expected to achieve quality school education in terms of managerialist concepts such as efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, with scant acknowledgement of the complexity of their role and the contradictions within the quality policy agenda.

The quality policy agenda for schooling is being pursued through a range of accountability instruments such as standardised testing of student performance; the development of professional standards for teachers and school leaders; a heightened focus on literacy and numeracy standards in curriculum and assessment and the general marketisation of schooling, which is realised through devolved governance, the public comparison of schools' performance through league tables, the provision of public support for private providers and adherence to the doctrine of school choice (Burch 2009; Watson 2009). Policies for social justice in education are also embedded in this agenda so that equity in education is portrayed in terms of accountability for schools' performance (Council of Australian Governments 2008). This reinforces the impression that individual schools and their teachers and leaders, rather than school systems, are primarily responsible for achieving equity in educational outcomes.

This chapter illustrates how these influences shape and constrain school leadership policy in Australia. The first section describes the Australian policy context in the last decade. Next the chapter discusses the development of a national policy quality agenda. It identifies policy discourses on quality that are evident in national educational policies and discusses how these discourses impact on school leadership. The discussion illustrates how complex, multiple, sometimes contradictory discourses both shape and constrain the professional practices of leaders. The section which follows examines how these discourses inform struggles over the control of the development of a national framework of professional standards for school leaders. The chapter illustrates the challenges posed by these struggles as it tells the story of the national professional body established to develop such a framework. The chapter then discusses changes to educational policy that have resulted from a change of federal government in 2007 and outlines how these changes have impacted both on the national policy agenda and on school leaders. The concluding

section considers how these policies for quality and accountability create tensions between leadership for quality and accountability and leadership for learning. Finally, the chapter speculates on the likely future direction of Australian educational policy and the place of an understanding of leadership for learning in Australian schools.

Multiple Contexts for National Policy Development

The Commonwealth of Australia is made up of six states and two territories. Under the Australian constitution, each of the state and territory governments has responsibility for the provision of school education in their jurisdiction, however, the federal government has the power to influence education policy through specific purpose payments to the states. Since the 1960s, the federal government has taken increased responsibility for developing national education policies for schooling, which it pursues both independently and in partnership with state and territory governments. Fragmentation of effort has resulted from a federal system where two levels of government and eight jurisdictions compete for responsibility over national education policy. The federal political system inevitably constrains the range of policy instruments and the level of resources available to pursue school leadership policy agendas at each level of government and among the eight jurisdictions (cf. Ingvarson et al. 2006).

For most of the first decade of the twenty-first century, national school education policy was contested by stakeholders throughout the Australian federation. Prior to the change of federal government in November 2007, the struggle for control over the direction of the national policy agenda was a three-cornered contest involving the federal government, the state and territory governments, and professional associations of teachers and school leaders. After the election of a federal Labor government in 2007, the arena of federal–state relations changed significantly through the strengthened role of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in national policy formulation (Council of Australian Governments 2009a). Comprising the six state premiers, the two chief ministers of the territories and the prime minister, COAG spearheaded an ambitious national reform agenda in education in December 2007. It then pursued this agenda in partnership with the Ministerial Council of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), the national Ministerial Council of all state and territory education ministers and the federal minister for education and training. This new federal partnership had the potential to shift the balance of power between educational stakeholders in a fundamental way. However, as will be seen in the discussion later in the chapter, this shift in power was not uncontested. Further, recent policy developments in the areas of both education and health seem to be raising the spectre of federal/state rivalries again, questioning the stability of the COAG partnership.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to detail the involvement of all stakeholders in the Australian policy context or to examine the policies of individual states and territories.

Therefore, the following discussion focuses on the national policy agenda pursued by the federal government, illustrating the consistent focus on the quality of schooling that has held teachers and school leaders accountable for the educational outcomes of Australian schools.

The National Quality Policy Agenda

While quality has been a policy focus in Australia for over 20 years (cf. Quality of Education Review Committee 1985), the current national policy agenda on school leadership in Australia emerged from concerns raised about the quality of teaching in Australia in the late 1990s. In 1998, a Senate Committee of Inquiry released a report raising concerns about the declining status of the teaching profession (Senate Employment Education and Training References Committee 1998). This report was followed in 2000 by the release of a federal government report of its own inquiry, *Teachers for the 21st Century: Making the Difference*, hereafter *Teachers for the 21st Century* (Australian Government Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs 2000), which was followed 3 years later by a further study, *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future – Advancing Innovation, Science Technology and Mathematics,* hereafter *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future* (Australian Government Department of Education and Science and Training 2003). These reports heralded the onset of an intense national policy focus on the quality of teachers and subsequently school leaders and the introduction of the Australian Government Quality Teacher Program (AGQTP) in 2000. Originally known as the Quality Teacher Programme (QTP), the programme was established to implement the proposals outlined in *Teachers for the 21st Century.*

Initially, from 2000 to 2004, the AGQTP had two objectives, namely, to update and improve teachers' skills and understanding in priority areas and to enhance the status of teaching in government and non-government schools (Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training 2005). Priority areas included literacy, numeracy, mathematics, science, information technology and vocational education. Subsequently, four new priority areas were added to the program: gifted and talented students; the education of students with special needs; the implementation of a National Safe Schools Framework and the development and implementation of professional standards for teachers and school leaders. The program was implemented through three main components: national strategic initiatives; state and territory professional learning projects and a new national body for the profession, initially called the National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership (NIQTSL).

An evaluation of this phase of the program found that there was a continuing imperative for a national program that focused on professional learning needs (i.e. to meet the first objective of the program) and recommended a continuing national commitment to increasing teachers' and school leaders' skills and understandings (Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training 2005).

The second phase of the program, from 2005 to 2009, had similar goals to the first phase, articulated as:

- Equipping teachers with the skills and knowledge needed for teaching in the twenty-first century;
- Providing national leadership in high priority areas of professional learning; and
- Improving the professional standing of school teachers and leaders (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2008, no page).

These goals were pursued through the same three policy instruments used in stage one, that is, national initiatives, state and territory projects and the national professional body (NIQTSL), which was re-named Teaching Australia – the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in 2006.

Policy Discourses on Quality in the AGQTP

As noted earlier, two policy documents, *Teachers for the 21st Century* (Australian Government Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs 2000) and *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future* (Australian Government Department of Education and Science and Training 2003) informed the initial direction of the AGQTP. Drawing on a framework developed by Sachs (2003), Thomas (2008) has analysed the discourses on quality constructed in these policies, identifying a discourse of quality assurance and a discourse of quality improvement. Both discourses held particular understandings of teachers and leaders. These particular understandings about good teachers, leaders and schooling were to influence the national policy agenda on quality for the next decade. Evidence of this influence is found in two recent booklets, (Curriculum Corporation 2007, 2008), which detail highlights of the projects funded by the AGQTP. Understandings of quality in both, *Teachers for the 21st Century* and *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future,* emphasised the importance of professional standards and the role of school leaders in their development, but advocated the development of standards through different means and for different purposes.

Teachers for the 21st Century linked standards to the improved accountability of both teachers and school leaders as a means of lifting student outcomes. Leaders were described as managers, responsible for improving teacher quality in a discourse of quality assurance that emphasised regulation and certification through standards. On the other hand, *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future* focused on quality improvement, emphasising the role of standards in teacher development through professional learning. Leaders were depicted as the leaders of a learning profession, leading and supporting teachers in their professional development and in the energising of schools for innovation. Of these two discourses, a discourse for quality assurance, given its focus on learning, is most favourable to leadership for learning.

It is important to note that elements of both discourses, that is of a regulatory quality assurance discourse and of a developmental discourse of quality improvement, can be traced in both policy documents. For example, although predominantly advocating regulation through certification, *Teachers for the 21st Century* notes that 'the development of standards requires teachers taking responsibility for their professional development and for using its outcomes to improve their teaching and their students' learning' (Australian Government Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs 2000, p. 14). It acknowledges the importance of teachers both to the development of professional standards and to the raising of educational standards, as explained in the following extract.

> Raising the standards of student performance is an on-going task, not just for teachers but for the community as a whole. It requires cooperative effort from the Commonwealth Government, State and Territory government and non-government education providers, schools, principals, professional associations and parents. But the primary means by which educational standards will be raised will be by working with and through the teaching profession. (Australian Government Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs 2000, p. 12)

Similarly, while best described as emphasising quality improvement, *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future* suggests elements of a discourse of quality assurance when it notes 'professional standards will provide a basis of competence for all teachers. … They will also improve the public profile and standing of the teaching profession' (Australian Government Department of Education and Science and Training 2003, p. xxi).

A regulatory discourse of quality assurance dominates both *Teachers for the 21st Century* and the 2007 booklet of AGQTP highlights. It is characterised by an emphasis on the link between high quality schooling, student learning outcomes and the need to improve teacher skills. That is, both teachers and leaders are assessed as underperforming and needing improvement, thus justifying the need for professional standards for teachers and leaders, and the need for external assistance in raising professional standards. Such assistance is to be provided by government, in the form of national and state initiatives. Leaders are depicted as the means of raising the standards of teachers, but also as needing to improve their own skills. The implied mechanism for achieving higher standards is through effective management identified through higher levels of accountability.

On the other hand, a discourse of quality assurance is dominant in *Australia's Teachers, Australia's Future* and in the 2008 booklet of AGQTP highlights. Both documents recognise that the quality of Australian teachers is not problematic but that there is a need to revitalise teaching through professional learning. Teachers are described as professional, life-long learners who should take control of their learning in professional learning communities. This professional learning would be guided by standards that are developed through professional bodies. Leaders are depicted as being professionals who energise schools for innovation. Such leadership is distributed, in the sense that it is defined by neither position nor by age. Quality leadership, as defined in a discourse for quality assurance, is characterised by support for innovation.

The presence of both discourses in the policies and documents associated with the AGQTP illustrates the complexity and contradictory nature of the policy field on quality schooling. This complexity is exemplified by the discussion of standards found in the 2007 booklet of AGQTP highlights. As noted above, the development of standards was mentioned explicitly in the 2007 booklet, which noted the growing emphasis on standards in state and territory teacher registration authorities. The booklet endorses a regulatory role for employer-sponsored teacher registration authorities, stating 'the establishment of standards bodies in the states and territories provides an ideal context for teachers to articulate the kinds of professional learning that will best assist them in meeting those standards' (Curriculum Corporation 2007, p. 8).

Since 2007, the quality assurance discourse has continued to be evident in federal government policy documents and is articulated most recently in the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality. Under the National Agreement, states are expected to equip principals with the skills to manage a performance culture in their schools, in which high quality teachers are identified and principals are to have increased flexibility to reward high-performing staff. Performance assessment is to be measured largely in terms of student learning outcomes, which will be monitored systematically in an evidence-based learning system (Council of Australian Governments 2009b).

While both discourses recognise the importance of standards, the issue of who sets the standards, and the consequences of this for professional autonomy, is the key distinction between the two quality discourses. That is, the question of whether standards are developed through the teaching profession, or whether they are externally mandated through bureaucracies, has implications for the autonomy of the teaching profession and for the leaders of that profession. If standards are developed by bodies external to the profession with a view to standardising procedures rather than building knowledge about best professional practice, they become the means for the regulation and control of the profession and are likely to diminish teachers' and school leaders' professional autonomy. That is, while standards in themselves may present opportunities to rethink and revitalise the profession, it is how these standards are used that determines their ability to do so (Anderson 2001; Sachs 2005). A fundamental struggle for control over the development and implementation of professional standards was a feature of the national policy agenda throughout the decade. Teaching Australia, the national professional body established by the federal government for the teaching profession in 2005 proved to be an arena for this contest.

From Professional Body to Government Organisation

Established as an independent company owned by the federal government in 2005, Teaching Australia was envisaged as a national body for the teaching profession, representing the professional interests of both teachers and school leaders. With an

independent chair, its governing board consisted of representatives of the major professional associations of teachers and school leaders in both the government and non-government school sectors. Significantly, neither employing authorities nor teacher unions nor the federal government were represented on the Teaching Australia Board. As a professional body, Teaching Australia's role was to support and advance the quality of teaching and leadership; strengthen and advance the standing of the profession and develop as the national body for the teaching profession (Teaching Australia 2006c).

Developing Standards for and by the Profession

All three objectives assigned to Teaching Australia were concerned with developing the profession. Activities planned for the period 2006–2009 to assist Teaching Australia in meeting the objectives, included among others:

- Developing national systems of advanced teaching standards and standards for school leadership;
- Supporting and initiating national professional development activities;
- Recognising quality teaching and school leadership through a national awards program;
- Developing and promoting a Charter for the teaching profession;
- Developing a national system for accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs; and
- Promoting teaching as a career through materials and messages (Teaching Australia 2006c, p. 5).

Many of these activities were concerned with school quality and professional standards for teachers and school leaders, as its strategic plan stated, 'Teaching Australia seeks to be a strong unifying body acting in the interests of teachers and school leaders, drawing the profession together to promote quality teaching and school leadership for the good of all Australians' (Teaching Australia 2006c, p. 7). It is noteworthy that the development of standards for advanced teaching and school leadership was to be achieved through consultation with the teaching profession. To this end, Teaching Australia embarked on nationwide consultation with the profession to develop standards for accomplished teachers and school principals from 2006. In undertaking this process, Teaching Australia aimed to build on the sets of professional standards that had already been developed by professional associations of teachers (Teaching Australia 2006a). Teaching Australia also developed a statement of values and commitments to underpin the national professional standards, called a *Charter for the Teaching Profession*, released in March 2008 (Teaching Australia 2008b).

Australia's goal to develop national standards through a nationwide consultation process was ambitious in both scope and complexity and was expected to take several years to complete (Teaching Australia 2007a). It began with a framework of

capabilities for all teachers and principals, within which sets of descriptors could be developed for subject specialisations and levels of schooling (Teaching Australia 2008a). Although Teaching Australia's approach to developing professional standards was time consuming and labor intensive, it was inclusive of all stakeholders and involved extensive consultation within the teaching profession. Standards developed in this way, make the social and professional expectations and obligations of teachers transparent, and are most likely to be in the best interests of the development of a strong, autonomous teaching profession (Sachs 2003).

Contesting the Direction of Policies for Quality

From 2005 to 2009, Teaching Australia's role in shaping the direction of national education policies in regard to quality teaching and school leadership was contested at many levels. Teaching Australia was established to represent only the professional associations of teachers and school principals, therefore employing authorities and teacher unions were effectively excluded from the national policy agendas within its remit. Employing authorities continued to develop and implement professional standards for teachers and school leaders within their own jurisdictions and pursued a national policy consensus through MCEETYA, independently of Teaching Australia. As a national professional body that neither employed teachers or school principals, nor had employing authorities on its board, Teaching Australia had limited scope to build policy consensus among all stakeholders on the issue of national professional standards for teaching and school leadership. Teaching Australia also lacked any direct membership base among the teaching profession, relying instead upon the legitimacy conferred by the representatives of professional associations on its board, all of whom continued to operate independently in policy forums as representatives of their respective associations.

Thus, from the time that Teaching Australia commenced work in 2005, employing authorities, teacher unions, professional associations and other stakeholders continued to work on their own policy agendas at both the local and national level. These agendas and, in particular, the development of a framework for professional standards for teachers and school leaders, were pursued in parallel by stakeholders through other forums between 2005 and 2009.

The main forum used by the states and territories to pursue their version of a national policy agenda throughout the decade was the MCEETYA. As state and territory education ministers were the main school employing authorities, they had a strong interest in issues, such as professional standards, that could potentially influence teachers' salaries. Early in the decade, MCEETYA had established a Taskforce, called the Teacher Quality and School Leadership Taskforce (TQELT), charged with providing advice on a strategic national approach to addressing issues of teacher supply and demand (Ministerial Council on Education and Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2003). This taskforce produced a *National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching* that was intended to

be used to align graduate, or entry-level teaching standards to be applied by the teacher registration authorities in each jurisdiction (Teacher Quality and School Leadership Taskforce 2003).

In 2005, MCEETYA declared that Improving Teacher and School Leadership Capacity was one of its areas of priority for collaborative work in the next 3 years (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2005). To progress this agenda, MCEETYA established the Improving Teacher Quality and School Leadership Capacity Working Group, which had, as one of its terms of reference, 'To assure the quality of teachers and teaching by ensuring that nationally consistent standards for graduate teachers are developed and embedded in requirements for teaching in all Australian schools' (House of Representatives Education and Vocational Training Committee 2006, p. 2). With the establishment of this Working Group, MCEETYA launched a national co-operative project to develop national professional standards based on the National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching developed by the TQELT in 2003 (House of Representatives Education and Vocational Training Committee 2006).

Another set of stakeholders who developed a close working relationship with MCEETYA was the national association of state and territory teacher registration authorities. In the space of a few years at the beginning of the decade, every state and territory education system (except for the Australian Capital Territory) had established a quasi-independent authority to register teachers for employment within their jurisdiction. Many of these bodies had developed, or were in the process of developing, professional standards and some had responsibility for accrediting teacher education courses offered by higher education institutions. By 2005, Australia's seven teacher registration authorities had formed a federated organisation with New Zealand, called the Australasian Forum of Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities (AFTRAA). The AFTRAA worked closely with MCEETYA to protect its members' interests, particularly on the issue of a proposed national system for accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs, which Teaching Australia was formulating (Teaching Australia 2006b) as well as the national professional standards on which such a system would have to be based (Teaching Australia 2007b).

MCEETYA recognised AFTRAA as playing a national policy role and committed its senior education officials through the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee (AESOC) to working with AFTRAA to define its relationship with MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2005). In 2006, MCEETYA endorsed a set of Terms of Reference that gave AFTRAA a broad policy brief in the areas of pre-service teacher education accreditation; teacher registration; professional standards; continuous professional learning; professional disciplinary matters and mutual recognition issues. AFTRAA was charged with an advisory role to MCEETYA on these and other issues 'of national importance' (House of Representatives Education and Vocational Training Committee 2006, p. 2).

During this period, Teaching Australia had proceeded with its work on the design of a national teacher accreditation system for teacher preparation as well as

national professional standards for teachers and school leaders, consulting extensively with stakeholders and releasing several discussion papers (Teaching Australia 2006a, b, 2007a, b). In early 2008, Teaching Australia ceased working on a national accreditation system for teacher education, but continued to work on national professional standards for highly accomplished teachers and school leaders.

Re-establishing Control over Professional Standards

In late 2009, the Ministerial Council, with the federal government's agreement, announced the replacement of Teaching Australia with a new body that would 'provide national leadership for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership' (Ministerial Council for Education and Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs 2009a, p. 1). The three specific roles of the new body are to 'develop and oversee a set of national standards for teaching and school leadership'; implement 'an agreed system of national accreditation of teachers based on these standards' and 'promote excellence and national leadership in the professional development of teachers and school leaders' (Ministerial Council for Education and Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs 2009a, p. 1–2). Called the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), the new body is governed by a board that includes nominees from all eight government school employing authorities as well as representatives of the Catholic and Independent education sectors, education unions and professional associations (Ministerial Council for Education and Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs 2009b, p. 2). That is, its board is dominated by representatives of employing authorities with professional associations having a minor role.

In announcing the establishment of the AITSL, the federal government and state and territory education ministers reiterated the principles of the quality agenda that continue to characterise the national policy context. This agenda informed by a regulatory discourse of quality assurance as evidenced by the following statement.

> All Ministers are committed to supporting high quality teaching and school leadership. Ministers recognised that teacher quality is the single greatest in-school influence on student engagement and achievement and that improving teacher quality requires both school leadership from principals and new approaches to teacher recruitment, retention and reward. (Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs 2009a, p. 1)

The new institute is charged explicitly with supporting the quality reform agenda and the national school leadership policies defined by COAG. Its work is to finalise a professional standards framework for teachers across the three domains of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement, and to provide the architecture within which generic, specialist and subject-area standards will be developed. This framework will replace the 2003 MCEETYA standards framework and is expected to provide the basis for a nationally consistent

certification/accreditation process for teachers and school leaders and a national framework for professional learning for principals, teacher and school leaders by 2011 (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2009; Council of Australian Governments 2009b). The intention is for national professional standards to be used to underpin the performance management of teachers and principals in Australian schools.

The abolition of Teaching Australia, a national professional body for teachers and school leaders, and its replacement with a national institute, representing the interests of employing authorities, indicates a major shift in the direction of national policy towards professional standards for teachers and school leaders. The change from a national body charged with developing standards for teachers and leaders, to AITSL, a government organisation, highlights the importance of questions about who develops standards. The new institute has a mandate to develop and implement national professional standards on behalf of employing authorities. By virtue of this change, the development of professional standards has been removed from the control of professional associations, where concerns with standards reflect professional knowledge about pedagogy and practices that enhance student learning. Instead, the development of standards has been linked closely to employment, regulation and accountability. This shift in policy direction is evidence of the entrenchment of the quality assurance discourse in the national policy agenda. Consequently, the autonomy of teachers and school leaders in quality debates has been limited. Clearly, a quality assurance discourse focused on accountability for performance has implications for school leaders and for leadership for learning in all Australian schools.

A New Federal Policy Consensus?

The above discussion illustrates how the Australia policy context is characterised by multiple, at times contradictory discourses, which both shape and constrain the professional identities and practices of school leaders. Further, it is a dynamic field, in which policies are contested by stakeholders. Currently, it is in a state of flux further exacerbated by the change from a conservative to a Labor national government at the end of 2007. Such a change was a *cruce tension point* (Woodside-Jiron 2004), a time when things change, including educational policies. As Newby (2007) notes 'a change of government… is certainly a most important circumstance from which anyone… [could] draw the inescapable conclusion that the prevailing *political* agenda will impact on the way a society decides how to prepare its teachers [emphasis in original]' (p. 119).

Following the election of the federal Labor government in 2007, the nature of Commonwealth-State relations in Australia was radically reformed as the federalist body, the COAG was charged with steering national policy agendas in many areas including education. The reform process, proposed by the federal government through COAG, invited states and territories to be strong partners in implementing the Labor government's national policy agenda. Education Ministers welcomed

this development, noting that it 'replaces the ad-hoc approach that has marked recent years' (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2008, p. 1). This following discussion illustrates how the new national Labor government pursued its reform agenda for schooling through a nascent institution of co-operative federalism, the COAG.

The COAG Reform Process

COAG endorsed five outcomes for Australian schooling that were subsequently ratified by the Education Ministerial Council. They were as follows: (a) all children are engaged in, and benefit from schooling; (b) young people meet basic literacy and numeracy standards and levels of achievement are improving; (c) Australian students excel by international standards; (d) schooling promotes the social inclusion and reduces the educational disadvantage of children, especially indigenous children and (e) young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs Attachment B 2008, p. 12).

Six broad policy directions were deemed necessary to achieve these outcomes. These directions, which now underpin the national policy reform agenda, are improving teacher and school leader quality; high standards and expectations; greater accountability and better directed resources; modern, world class teaching and learning environments including ICT; integrated strategies for low-SES school communities and boosting parental engagement (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs Attachment B 2008, p. 12). The first three directions were key elements of the national quality agenda, indicating the continuing dominance of the quality assurance discourse in the new policy context. Evidence for this dominance can be found in MCEETYA's announcement of its commitment to address issues associated with 'rewards, incentives and career structures capable of attracting and retaining quality teachers' and agreed to the federal government commissioning 'research to inform a national partnership (NP) about effective ways to reward quality teaching' (Ministerial Council of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 2008. pp. 2–3).

By embracing the COAG reform process, the Ministerial Council re-established the central role of the states as employing authorities in the national policy agenda and afforded a prominent role to state education ministers, particularly in regard to professional standards for teachers and principals and the issue of performance pay. As a national body representing the teaching profession, Teaching Australia was not a party to the collaborative policy development spearheaded through COAG and endorsed by the MCEETYAs. Thus, the influence of professional associations of teachers and school leaders at the national level was diminished, indicating once more the dominance of a discourse of quality assurance. It would appear that the profession, its teachers and leaders, was deemed incapable of developing standards without government assistance.

Pursuing Quality Through National Partnership Agreements

Under the COAG reform agenda, throughout 2008, state and territory education ministries were involved in complex bilateral and multilateral negotiations with the federal government to define the scope of NP Agreements that would dictate the direction of federal funding for schooling over the next 5 years. The interests of non-government employers were represented by state and territory governments. Teacher unions and professional associations of teachers and principals were not directly involved.

Under the new COAG-sponsored inter-governmental agreement, an array of federal specific purpose payments to state and territory governments has been rolled into block grants to be paid under three NPs specifying agreed program outcomes. These new payments – NP Agreements – are to fund specific projects and to facilitate and/or reward states that deliver on nationally significant reforms (Council of Australian Governments 2008). The three NP Agreements are the National Partnership Agreement for Literacy and Numeracy, The National Partnership for Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities, and The National Partnership for Smarter Schools – Quality Teaching.

All the NP Agreements outline significant national initiatives for the next half-decade and all emphasise the importance of leadership for quality and accountability. For example, the National Partnership Agreement on Low Socioeconomic Status School Communities aims to transform the nature of schooling in the most disadvantaged school communities through affording principals greater autonomy over managing teacher performance and through the introduction of performance pay. It facilitates funding for nationally significant reforms including incentives to attract high-performing principals and teachers and the adoption of best-practice performance management and staffing arrangements that articulate a clear role for principals (Council of Australian Governments 2009d; NSW Department of Employment Education Training And Youth Affairs 2009).

The other two NPs place particular emphases on quality and accountability. Specifically, the NP Agreement for Literacy and Numeracy aims to 'put in place the infrastructure and practices that will deliver sustained improvement in literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students, especially those who are falling behind' (Council of Australian Governments 2009c, p. 3). Literacy and numeracy standards for all teachers are expected to be part of the national teacher standards and accreditation system developed under the Teacher Quality NP and school leaders are expected to develop 'a whole school culture of high performance in literacy and numeracy' (Council of Australian Governments 2009c, p. 9).

Increased Accountability for School Performance

The NP Agreement for Literacy and Numeracy provides for the establishment of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

ACARA is responsible for developing a national curriculum, overseeing national assessments of student achievement and providing public reports on school performance. ACARA is authorised to publish information on each Australian school's performance, including national testing results and school attainment rates, the indicators relevant to the needs of the student population and the school's capacity, outlining the numbers and qualifications of its teaching staff and its resources. From 28 January 2010, this information has been published on the 'My School' website enabling the public to:

- Access a snapshot of a school using nationally consistent indicators;
- Compare the performance of a school with that of the average performance of all;
- Compare the performance of schools in Australia and that of statistically similar schools across Australia;
- Search for schools nearby to the school displayed, with hyperlinks to the profile page of that school;
- Identify and learn about high-performing schools (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2009, no page).

The decision of education ministers to authorise publication of performance data on individual schools by ACARA was highly contested by the profession. Principal associations raised concerns about the overreliance on national testing results to measure an individual school's performance and the possible misuse of these data to compile league tables to make simplistic comparisons between schools (Australian Primary Principals Association 2010; Australian Secondary Principals Association 2010). The publication of these data places demands on school leaders to respond to public scrutiny of their schools performance relative to other schools. Thus, while the new national education agenda emphasises the importance of school leadership, and may provide support for professional learning to pursue this objective, new forms of public accountability, such as the publication of reports on the My School website, place additional burdens on principals. These developments carry the risk of distracting principals from the more important task of developing leadership for learning.

However, the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality is even more directly linked to the promotion of quality and accountability. This NP Agreement will progress an extensive menu of national policy agendas concerned with quality and accountability. In summary, the new policy initiatives to be pursued under the partnership are new professional standards to underpin national reforms; recognition and reward for quality teaching; a framework to guide professional learning for teachers and school leaders; national accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses; national consistency in teacher registration; national consistency in accreditation/certification of Accomplished and Leading Teachers; improved mobility of the Australian teaching workforce; joint engagement with higher education to provide improved pre-service teacher education; new pathways into teaching; data collection to inform continuing reform action and workforce planning and improved performance management in schools (Education Queensland 2009; Council of Australian Governments 2009b).

Thus, the NP Agreement on Teacher Quality aims to improve school leadership by requiring states and territories to trial (and eventually rollout) new approaches to teacher recruitment, retention and reward. In the final 2 years of the 4-year agreement, specific reward payments are being offered to states for reforms that improve teacher remuneration structures, increase school-based decision-making and improve support for teachers in hard-to-staff and disadvantaged schools. A final element of this partnership is the agreement to develop and implement a National Professional Teacher Standards Framework and a certification/accreditation process for teachers and school leaders. Developed by AITSL, the national standards framework will provide a mechanism for the performance appraisal and professional recognition of teachers and principals that is linked to systems of performance pay.

The new national policy agenda now clearly connects leadership to student learning and holds school leaders to account for student learning outcomes and the performance of their schools. However, the precise way in which principals will be supported in the role of leading for learning has yet to unfold. Through NP Agreements, employing authorities are expected to support principals in this role through professional development in performance management and increased devolution of human resources management to the school level. This new era of performance management in schools will be underpinned by national standards for teachers and school principals developed by the AITSL.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined key discourses in the Australian educational policy context and their likely impact on the professional work of school leaders. The national education policy agenda in Australia is now politically focused on a quality assurance framework in which school principals are to be held accountable for student learning outcomes. Employing authorities are expected to equip school principals with the skills to manage teacher performance and national funding for professional development has been allocated to support them in this role. Expectations will be particularly high for principals of schools that are deemed to be performing below expectations in national literacy and numeracy assessments, and employing authorities are expected to grant significantly more autonomy to principals of such schools.

The COAG reform process that resulted in NP Agreements for school education marks a significant departure from the fragmented and contested approach that characterised the Australian education policy arena prior to 2007. The direction of national education policy is now firmly in the hands of the federal education minister and state employing authorities, overseen by the prime minister and premiers/chief ministers through the COAG Reform Council. This new nationwide political coalition has relegated professional associations of teachers and school leaders and teacher unions to a minor role in national policy conversations.

As this chapter illustrates, leaders in Australian schools work within a complex and shifting policy terrain where particular policy frameworks articulate certain leadership roles and responsibilities and exclude others. Within this terrain, the issue of quality has emerged as a significant element of the Australian education policy agenda and in so doing has become inextricably linked to teachers and school leaders. The Australian education policy agenda has constructed a particular version of quality teachers and leaders that has been significantly influenced by a discourse of quality assurance. While the emphases on quality and accountability that now dominate national education policy acknowledge the importance of leadership for learning, the government has strengthened its accountability frameworks to measure the performance of school leaders in terms of student learning outcomes. These developments are likely to constrain and undermine the potential of school leaders to pursue leadership for learning.

If governments are serious about supporting principals as leaders of learning, employers – particularly large education systems – may need to review some of the managerial policy reforms of the past two decades. Issues to be addressed include the devolution of administrative functions to schools; the financial and educational accountability requirements imposed on schools; the way in which schools are funded and how school performance is measured and reported. If these issues are not adequately addressed, the nature of the school principal's role is likely to remain focused on management at the expense of leadership for learning. These strange bedfellows will need to be kept in balance, to ensure that the instrumental pursuit of educational accountability does not smother attempts to support school leaders in pursuing leadership for learning.

Significantly, until recently there was little discussion in educational policies of how the policies would impact on students, suggesting that policymakers find it difficult to conceptualise how education policy affects children (Fowler 2009). The above discussion has reinforced the belief that school leaders must be literate about policy and the policy process; that they need both theories and practical information about education policy and policymaking and that they must understand power and how to use it responsibly to exercise public leadership (Fowler 2009). In other words, in the current policy context, school leaders will need to exercise public leadership if they are to negotiate the policy tensions outlined in this chapter in order to provide a bridge between leadership for quality and accountability and leadership for student learning.

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Chapter 14
Leadership for Learning in China: The Political and Policy Context

Haiyan Qian and Allan Walker

Introduction

We know that leadership has a significant influence on student outcomes, second only to classroom teaching (Leithwood et al. 2006). This influence is commonly captured by the term *leadership for learning*; a term now enshrined in system nomenclature, policy prescription and professional capacity frameworks internationally. The widespread use of *leadership for learning* appears to assume an agreed definition; however, the fundamental nature of student outcomes and how leadership is defined remain contested and vary within as well as across different societal contexts. For example, student performance can be alternatively defined and measured by standardized test scores, a child's personal sense of well-being, and/or the development of habits of good citizenship (Jacobson and Bezzina 2008).

Despite the generally positive international trend that encourages leaders to position student learning as their major focus, the sub-text of related policy deserves careful reading. For example, a discussion of the traditional cultural underpinnings that constitute effective learning may inform policy makers and others of school-level relevance and practicality. The deeply-embedded cultural meaning of learning in schools often influences how policies are reframed, renegotiated and reinterpreted by leaders when the reality of the staffroom and classroom hits. This can easily result in a level of misalignment between policy effects and/or outcomes and

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policy intentions. In this chapter, we suggest that such a scenario describes the status of the leadership for learning policy in Mainland China.

The purpose of this chapter is to map the political and policy context that shapes how school leaders lead for learning in China. Little work has been done in this area in China despite her increasing visibility internationally. Further understanding will, therefore, not only add to the knowledge base in China itself, but also the international knowledge base of leadership for learning. For example, the current situation in China illustrates how conflicting understandings of learning can result in considerable confusion within schools.

China has a millennia-long tradition of valuing formally-examined student outcomes above all else. The lingering influence of the Imperial Exam[1] and its descendent – the National College Entrance Exam (colloquially referred to as the High Exam) – continues to equate student learning with excellent results in standardized examinations. This, however, is beginning to be seriously challenged, at least by senior policy makers. Over the last decade, the central government has moved to deemphasize the all-consuming High Exam by releasing a series of policy papers to promote quality-oriented education and student-centred pedagogy (Tao 2006). These reforms challenge principals to assume more responsibility as curriculum and instructional leaders. When normative demands for high exam results meet new, more pedagogically emancipatory policy requirements, how principals "lead for learning" begins to spin.[2]

Despite clearly-articulated reform intentions, principals in China find themselves in "messy" situations as they try to translate these intentions within the reality of their schools. There is tremendous pressure on principals from all directions to produce outstanding student performance on the High Exam. This pressure comes not just from parents, but also, often surreptitiously, from government officials, even as they publicly condemn exam-oriented teaching and learning. Thus, principals are forced to engage in both front-stage and back-stage performances when they play-out their role as leaders for learning. As such, their work lives are uncomfortable, increasingly uncertain and fraught with tension.

This chapter has three main sections. The first section sketches a fairly broad picture of student learning in China. It is necessarily broad given the massive diversity within China itself. More specifically, the section discusses the long-standing "exam culture" and recent political initiatives designed to challenge exam-oriented education. The most influential of the new reforms proposes radical curriculum change. The second section introduces a study conducted in Shanghai with a group

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[1] The Imperial Examination System lasted in China for 1,300 years – from its founding during the Sui Dynasty in 605 to its abolition near the end of Qing Dynasty in 1905. The examinations determined who among the population would be permitted to enter the state's bureaucracy.

[2] With the advent of the new century, reform focus in China shifted from the structural and administrative changes in the education system to the transformation of school curriculum and teaching and learning qualities. "Quality Education" (*suzhi jiaoyu*) became a major goal of education polices. Major policies include the *Cross-Century Quality Education Project* and *Decisions on Deepening Education Reform and Promoting Quality Education in an All-round Way* issued by Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1999.

of senior secondary school principals that was designed to uncover their experiences of curriculum reform. It focuses on how principals interpret the reforms in their schools. The findings show a considerable gap between policy intent and policy effect. The third section illustrates the tensions Chinese principals face at the school level as they attempt to address the demands the reforms impose on what and how students should learn. It then suggests some implications for leadership for learning that accompany these tensions.

Student Learning in China

The broader context framing education in China is little different from other developed and developing societies. Over the last 20 or so years, globalization has led to increasingly fierce global competition. National competitiveness is most often narrowly interpreted as economic power, which in turn is expressed by knowledge power (Cheung and Walker 2006). Almost without exception, nations adhere to the creed that, "it is the quality of (their) education and training systems which will decisively shape the international division of labour and national prosperity" (Brown and Lauder 1997, p. 174). Perhaps not surprisingly, governments across the world, almost regardless of their ideological biases, have poured energy into a range of radical educational restructuring initiatives to promote student learning. For example, over the past decade under *No Child Left Behind* and other policies, the United States has engaged in numerous efforts to improve student academic achievement (Militello et al. 2009). Among the more controversial of these has been the introduction of different levels of high-stakes testing and an increasing trend towards teaching to the test (Carnoy et al. 2003; Earl and Katz 2002). In many cases leadership for learning has come, often controversially, to mean the search by leaders for ways to improve their students' performance on standardized exams.

Interestingly, the meaning of leadership for learning in China is moving in a different direction, at least rhetorically. Education in China has long been dominated by an uncompromising orientation towards exams. (High) exam results have been seen as (and largely remain) so important that the quality of students, schools and indeed principals are judged solely by student academic performance on high stakes tests. Consequently, Chinese schools demand long teaching hours and engage in almost endless "drilling" for exams. Students have heavy workloads, are unhappy and lack initiative and creativity (Li 2004). Leadership for learning, which is increasingly promoted by the government, at least publicly promotes better performance in non-standardised and more process-oriented areas, such as inquiry learning.

Initiative and creativity are considered essential at the national level for increased global competitiveness. Thus, the major student learning challenge facing China – especially in the eyes of government policy-makers – is to confront exam-oriented education through the promotion of holistic student development. Towards this end,

a series of policy initiatives have been released over the last decade or so. One of the most high-profile of these is the New Curriculum Reform[3] launched in 2001 (Zhong 2006). This reform arguably has been one of the most important influences on principals as leaders of student learning.

Before outlining the details of the curriculum reform, it is necessary to understand a little of the history of the High Exam system and the profound impact it has had in China. Lessening the impact of this deep-rooted exam system has been the key driver of recent quality-oriented education reforms (Zhong 2006).

The High Exam System

According to former Vice Premier Li Lanqing (2004), curriculum reform was prompted by widespread calls to reduce student workload. It was, however, directly from the demands of the High Exam system that the long tiresome hours of schoolwork flowed; a system that was supported by parental and societal beliefs that are deeply fixed in the Chinese psyche.

China has a long history of relying on high-stakes exams to select people for important jobs. For 2000 years, China's education system was built around the Civil Service Examination system, which was predicated on the Confucian concept of serving the state through learning (Gu 1981; Mao 1984). The system allowed the ruling class to select the brightest intellectuals for government service through an anonymous examination. Thus, intellectuals, regardless of class or background, had a chance for advancement; a system that enabled people to change their social status through education. By doing well in the exam they could not only serve the imperial government, but also improve the status of their family, bringing honour to their parents and ancestors (Gu 2006, p. 173).

The other side of the coin, however, was that the exam system became an effective means for the government to control intellectuals. By controlling the content of the examination, the government controlled the school curriculum and thus the "type" of intellectuals who ran the system. What passed for a curriculum was little more than the memorization of classical cannons (for example, Confucian philosophy), which sought to inculcate the "right" values (Sunoo 1985). Obedience was the most valued characteristic of an intellectual and as such was purposefully cultivated by the education system. According to Gu (2006) this produced intellectuals who "dare not think, dare not speak, dare not take risks, and lack [a] pioneering and innovating spirit" (p. 173).

Although the imperial examination system ended in 1905, China's reliance on high-stakes testing did not, even with the foundation of the People's Republic of

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[3] The official document that marked the beginning of the Curriculum Reform was *Principles of Implementing Basic Education Curriculum (Provisional)* issued by the Ministry of Education on 7 June 2001. This is usually called the New Curriculum Reform in China.

China in 1949. In fact, the exam system under imperialism and communism shared an almost uncanny resemblance. The socialist education system was established to cultivate the *red* and *expert* "Socialist Man" (The "red" referred to political loyalty while the "expert" emphasized professional and technical knowledge) (Wang 2002). Both "Socialist Man" and "Confucian Man" were expected to possess virtues/qualities of selflessness, dedication to the ruling power, modesty and honesty (Louie 1984).

From 1949 to 1966 education practices were described as "Three Centredness" (*sange zhongxin*), that is, teacher-centredness, classroom-centredness and textbook-centredness (Tao 2006). In other words, education was almost entirely reliant on teachers transferring knowledge directly to students crowded passively into classrooms with the express purpose of helping them pass exams. Such practices (including the examination system), along with almost any semblance of organized education were ferociously criticized during the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976) when the entire school system ceased to function.

Upon Mao's death in 1976 one of the major tasks of the new (post-Mao) leadership was to resuscitate the education system and restore at least some sense of normality and stability. The reinstatement of the High Exam was seen as absolutely critical if this was to happen. Thus, the High Exam, under the title of the College Entrance Examination, was re-instituted in 1977.

In the 30 or so years since its reintroduction, the High Exam again became the top priority of generations of Chinese students and their families. Just as excelling in imperial exams was once the only road to influential officialdom, most parents believed, and in many cases still do believe, that the College Entrance Exam was the best, if not only, route to a successful future for their children. It is, therefore, extremely competitive and this contest seeps into every nook and cranny of the education enterprise. As Premier Li (2004) explained when justifying the implementation of the new curriculum reform in China:

> University entrance examinations inevitably drive primary and secondary schools to chase high enrollment rates. The pursuit of high enrollment rates invariably leads to competition in test scores, and the quest for high scores prompts schools to increase course load and difficulty (p. 337).

Curriculum Reform

Curriculum reform, which was proposed as the key strategy to promote higher quality education in China, is aimed squarely at changing beliefs about, and approaches to, teaching and learning. It focuses on the cultivation of moral development, innovative spirit and practical abilities among students. Curriculum reform began in 2001 when new criteria for elementary and secondary school curricula, syllabi standards and content of textbooks were established. New textbooks were designed to eliminate difficult, complicated, obscure and antiquated (*nan, fan, pian, jiu*) content.

The reform established a system whereby the curriculum was managed simultaneously at the central, local and school levels. As a form of decentralisation this called on schools, cities, districts and provinces to design school-based curricula that took local needs into account. In Shanghai,[4] for example, the new curriculum comprised three categories of courses: basic, extended and research courses (Shanghai Education Commission 2004). Responsibility was delegated to individual schools to design and organise extended and research courses. Each school established a curriculum reform team headed by the principal.

Curriculum reform was accompanied by a concomitant change in university enrolment policy. This was because, even though the availability of university places had increased steadily since 1999 (somewhat reducing the basic influence of the High Exam), problems associated with competition and approaches to learning and teaching had been shifted rather than alleviated. As university places became more accessible overall, society shifted student ambitions from entrance to university to acceptance to the "right" senior secondary school. Attendance at a high status school vastly increased the likelihood of being accepted to a prestigious university.

Competitive pressure, therefore, shifted from college entrance examinations to senior secondary school entrance examinations. This happened to the extent that parents with the means would spend tens of thousands of *yuan* to squeeze their children into elite schools rather than have them attend other schools (Li 2004). Perhaps not surprisingly, and especially with minimal resources, it soon became accepted practice for schools to charge school-choice fees (*zexiao fei*) for this group of students. As such, a range of elitist practices became embedded in and across a stratified range of schools.

In Shanghai, different types of schools (e.g. municipal exemplary schools, district exemplary schools, ordinary schools[5]) were subject to different student enrolment regulations. For example, while municipal exemplary schools were allowed to admit students from all over Shanghai, ordinary schools could only admit students from the district in which they were located. Each school could enrol a certain number of school-choice paying students (*zexiaosheng*) under the general principle of *Three Limits* (*sanxian*)[6] (Shanghai Education Commission 2006) but the policy also stipulated the maximum fee a school could charge for these students. This varied according to school status. Municipal exemplary (top-tier) schools could charge 30,000 *yuan* (around 4,400 USD), district exemplary schools 20,000 and ordinary schools 10,000.

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[4] Before the curriculum reform was adopted as a national policy, it had been piloted in Shanghai. Shanghai started the stage-1 curriculum reform as early as the end of 1980s while the pilot stage-2 Curriculum Reform in Shanghai started in 1998. Many practices adopted in the stage-2 reform can also be seen in the national policy papers.

[5] These are three different types of public senior secondary schools in Shanghai. The most elite is municipal exemplary school while the ordinary school has the lowest status.

[6] This means each school can enrol a limited quota of school-choice students (usually not exceeding 20% of the students to be admitted by a single school). These paying students have to meet certain score requirement (lower than the school score line but higher than the municipal score line) and pay certain amount of money (the maximum amount of money is policy-prescribed).

It should be noted here that curriculum reform did not deal specifically with the exam system – university and secondary school entrance exams remained the norm. As Premier Li (2004) explained, "In comparison with other selection methods, tests are still the fairest and the most sensible. Entrance exams cannot be dispensed with for enrolment in senior secondary schools and universities. Regular tests in schools are necessary as well, and cannot be abolished either".

In summary, the curriculum reform demanded that school principals in China implement less restrictive, more innovative approaches to learning and teaching, with principals being granted more freedom and power (at least in some ways) to do this. As such, their role as leaders of learning has become more important and their potential for influence, at least theoretically, has increased. They are, therefore, faced with the challenge of leading their schools towards student-centred classroom practice, delivering a more relevant curriculum, meeting diverse (individual) learning needs, and improving the quality of teaching and the level of student learning outcomes. This is by no means an easy task and serious questions remain about whether (and how) principals perceive and cope with the challenges that accompany these changes. The rest of this chapter addresses these questions.

After briefly outlining a study conducted in Shanghai (Qian 2009), we draw on pertinent findings in order to analyse the role of principals as they interact with curriculum reform and tussle with their role as leaders of learning.

The broader study aimed to understand how principals perceive and enact their leadership for learning in the current reform context in mainland China. The reform context covered three important current policy initiatives in China: reform of the school review system, personnel reform and curriculum reform. This paper focuses on data that identified how principals interpret and implement curriculum reform. It is hoped that the findings shed light on the way school leaders in China perform their leadership role in relation to student learning.

The Study

The study investigated the experiences of 11 secondary school principals in Shanghai as they sought to lead their schools within a context of ongoing education reform. In-depth interviews, which took place in Shanghai schools in 2007 and 2008, formed the major data collection technique.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants. To qualify, a participant needed to be a principal of a secondary school. The study focused on secondary school principals given the importance of the High Exam. The High Exam is also the point at which many debates on school curriculum and review policies converge. Due to the pressure associated with the High Exam, the work lives of secondary school principals and teachers are particularly fraught with tensions and dilemmas (Yin and Lee 2008). There are two main types of secondary schools in China; high schools (*gaozhong*), which include students in grades 10–12 only, and middle schools (*zhongxue*), which have students in grades 7–12. Principals from both types of school participated in this study.

The eleven principals were selected to ensure variation among respondents. These included high profile *ming xiaozhang* (famous principals) who were renowned for their accomplishments, connections, rank and titles. Also included were a number of novice principals who were just starting to establish themselves as leaders. Some principals led prestigious schools that parents fought to have their children admitted to, while others worked in lower-status schools that were much less attractive to parents. Amongst the participants were principals who began their education careers as early as the 1960s, and were thus called *lao fashi* (a senior and experienced member in a field, particularly used in Shanghai dialect), as well as principals around the age of 40, often referred to as *qingnian xiaozhang* (young principals).

A number of common themes emerged across cases. The next section teases out some common themes that emerged from the principals' narratives that relate to curriculum reform.

Principals' Interpretation of Curriculum Reform

Course Confusion

Principals were not convinced of the efficacy of the change accompanying curriculum reform. The new curriculum in Shanghai was built around three categories of courses: basic, extended and research courses. The purpose of this was to provide students with more choice, cater to different student needs and inject more innovative areas of study. Principals were given power to develop and design extended and research courses. Devolving responsibility for these courses was designed to give them more discretion and so more influence over learning in their schools. In practice, however, the three different types of courses only over-complicated the curriculum and confused teachers and principals alike. For example, although Principal Y had a PhD in Education, he said it was still a huge amount of effort to understand what extended and research courses should actually entail. This meant that it was difficult to motivate teachers to design courses or for students to sign up for them.

The various education bureaux recognized this and launched "research and extensive course design" competitions as a way to motivate schools. Principals were interested in entering their school's programmes in such competitions and winning a prize. As Principal G explained, the extended and research courses were like the frontiers that a school needed to explore because through them their school could "brand" itself and thereby boost its reputation. As such, the extended and research courses were regarded as accessories that could be used for the purpose of advertising with the result that their effectiveness was called into question. As Principal J admitted, "frankly speaking, research courses developed by most schools are not effective. Most research is conducted just for the sake of research, or to win competitions".

Given the complicated curriculum structure and somewhat convoluted reasons behind schools offering extended and research courses, principals transferred the

pressure to reshape the curriculum onto teachers by asking them to develop additional electives. As a result, schools now have long lists of elective courses, such as English Literature, American Literature and Fun Mathematics that can be categorized as extended courses, and Social Investigation Activities, which can be classified as a research course. One consequence of this is the additional burden placed on students and teachers, which is ironic given that one of the major purposes of the curriculum reform was to ease students' course load.

In reality, however, the reform does not appear to have diminished the importance placed on courses designed to teach the basics. In China, the basics are the subjects included in central examinations: Chinese, Mathematics, English and Politics. These exam courses continue to dominate the curriculum in all schools. What the reform actually did was to add more courses on top of these basic courses, thereby reducing principals' ability to encourage more holistic student learning. For example, Principal Y explained that students had less time for themselves than before the reforms were instituted:

> An underlying thinking of our education is that we keep feeding our kids in the hope of strengthening their nutrition. It is similar to our belief that greater effort results in more achievement and more input can lead to better output. …thus a major problem facing our schools is over education. …our students are not enjoying school life.

Exam Contagion

The principals suggested that the main reason the curriculum reform was unable to shift the emphasis from basic courses was because the examination system remained unchanged. Their unambiguous message was that the High Exam remains the single most important predictor of success and that society as a whole, including parents and superintendents continue to judge schools in terms of their performance on the High Exam. Principal L represented their feelings.

> The only criterion by which society values a high school is how many students go to college. The school superintendents also view schools in this way. Thus, it is meaningless talking about [promoting all-round development] and cultivating more Lu Ban (a famous craftsman in ancient China) among students. One hundred Lu Bans cannot compare with a *zhuangyuan* (the person who achieves the highest score) in the High Exam.

Principal U provided further evidence of the influence of the High Exam. He recounted how, in April, the district bureau had summoned all high school principals and asked them to put the High Exam (scheduled in June) as their top priority. In the meeting, the bureau even suggested that principals move their desks into the Senior Teachers' Offices. In other words, principals were expected to actively encourage teachers to focus strictly on improving student exam scores and to monitor this carefully.

Thus, although the curriculum reform aimed to change the teaching and learning process by adding extended and research courses, it did not touch upon the outcome, that is, the exam system. As a result, many principals felt puzzled and uneasy

about their role, especially as leaders of learning. Principal Y used the metaphor of blowing up a balloon to describe the situation:

> We are blowing up a balloon…We put a lot of elements into the balloon and expect a chemical reaction to take place… We want students and teachers to be more active in the classroom. We add in research courses and extended courses. Then, what happens? We find the outlet of the balloon is the same and the evaluation criterion has not changed. People start to lose confidence in the curriculum reform. We are blowing up the balloon, but there are no other outlets. Many people, including principals, cannot understand it.

The confusion felt by principals as they were torn between orthodoxy and policy rhetoric was apparent at all levels. On the one hand, they saw clearly that the real criteria for success remained unchanged and were thus unwilling to risk shifting the emphasis away from the High Exam. Principals G and X used the term "bottom-line" frequently to refer to the exam. In their opinion, if a school relaxed its focus on the High Exam, this would weaken its very foundation. On the other hand, they were also aware that they were expected to implement the new reform. Their perspective was that as a national reform it had to be implemented to demonstrate their fidelity. Consequently, there was a considerable gap between the purpose for which the policy was designed and its actual effect at the school level. As Principal L stated, "although the state has done a lot to promote the curriculum reform, schools are dealing with it in a much less enthusiastic way".

In sum, curriculum reform has not promoted change in schools, and the change that has taken place has not been deep but weak and shallow. Principals attributed this to the intractability of the exam system, one that remains largely unchanged in terms of form and importance. They are, therefore, reluctant to risk challenging traditional teaching and learning practices, especially if they have produced good exam results. Data show that the conflicting goals dominating principals' work lives generate tensions which in turn confuse why and how they apply their leadership to improve student learning outcomes.

Discussion

The dominant tension across the principals' narratives was between delivering High Exam performance and promoting more holistic student development.

Leadership for Learning is Confused by the Conflicting Goals of Schooling, and Contested Definitions of Student Learning

Principals are pressured to get more and more students admitted to universities – an age-old goal of schooling in China, where university entrance is explicitly connected to a better and more secure future at all levels of society. As a result, the quality of a secondary school is almost exclusively determined by the number of

students admitted to university and a school's success is judged according to this single criterion by parents and society in general. Thus, the overriding pragmatic pressure on principals remains how to sustain or improve their students' performance on the high-stakes High Exam.

At the same time principals are expected by mandated policy under the new reform curriculum to promote student initiative and creativity. More teaching hours have been allocated to extended and research courses to cultivate creativity. Principals are, therefore, pressured to demonstrate publicly that their schools adhere to the curriculum reform.

The tension between these opposing goals is all too prevalent in the principals' lives. They are plainly confused about what leadership for learning means and what it aims to achieve. Where do leaders concentrate their actions – exam results? More holistic outcomes? Or a bit of both? To further complicate matters, although government officials publicly advocate the importance of more holistic education, the underlying message they unofficially send to principals is that exam results should remain the key goal of schools.

Leadership for Learning is Confused by Lack of Linkage Between Curriculum Reform and the Exam System

A real and seemingly irresolvable problem for principals is the disconnection between what the curriculum reform proposes and what the exam system demands. The criterion applied by society and implicitly applied by government simply does not match the reform. The principals in the study clearly believed that, although government agencies openly advocated the curriculum reform, in private they sent clear messages that schools were expected to attain consistently good results in the High Exam – and that this was *the* priority.

Consequently, principals reflected the government stance and endorsed the reform in public, with achievements in areas defined by curriculum reform always being highlighted on school websites. Likewise, school publicity materials devote page after page to the extended and research courses they have designed. The articles written by principals themselves often list the new school curriculum as an important achievement. In reality, it appears that school principals are playing lip service to the implementation of the new curriculum reforms. Principal T's words capture this:

> In this respect, I will not contradict the municipal education bureau. I am clever. There is nothing to bargain or discuss, because we are a public school. I just need to combine my interpretation with the policy during the process of implementation.

Despite open support for curriculum reform, stories coming from schools paint a different picture. Principals showed that they were remarkably pragmatic and demonstrated that a simple, logical prioritization was taking place. First, High Exam results are widely recognised by the public – failure in the exam disappoints

and alienates parents and officials, so achieving high exam marks is consistently the bottom-line for schools. Second, the extended and research courses demanded by the reforms are not examinable; therefore, it is unlikely that the outcomes of these courses are measurable, at least in the short term. Therefore, the wisest path was to openly preach the virtues of the new curriculum but keep the real emphasis on the High Exam. As Principal Y said, "you may find that the curriculum reform is haunted by various deceptions".

Thus, despite the fact that principals were in principle given the power to redesign and manage teaching and learning programmes, they had to use that power in a context that continued to value exam results over student development, which is much more difficult to evaluate. As a result, principals hesitated to use the power devolved to them in relation to curriculum change and, therefore, implemented few genuine changes in learning design and/or pedagogies. This was even more of an issue in lower-status schools. These schools enrol students with lower academic achievement, but face similar expectations from parents and the government to have students admitted to university. Thus, principals from these schools might make minor changes but do not attempt any deep or fundamental changes to teaching modes or the curriculum.

Chinese principals' work was fraught with confusion and tension. This left them uncertain about what tack to take in terms of improving student learning. As a result, they were driven by societal and (hidden) systemic considerations to prioritise and gear their leadership towards formal, measurable exam outcomes rather than less measurable reform-espoused outcomes. This situation carries at least three implications for leadership for learning in Chinese schools, as well as in other countries aiming to make improvements around student learning.

1. School leaders can exert leadership for learning only when learning goals are clearly and explicitly defined. Darling-Hammond and Ifill-Lynch (2006) explain, "struggling learners benefit when learning goals and the desired quality of learning products are public and explicit" (p. 13). Chinese principals, however, are often faced with ambiguous student learning goals that are defined by different people and on different occasions. It is undoubtedly difficult for them to promote authentic student learning in their schools. But is it impossible?
2. When there are multiple, complex and compelling internal and external forces demanding schools' attention, it is often the leadership shown by principals that can make a difference. Multiple studies (e.g. Leithwood et al. 2006; Militello et al. 2009) have shown that successful schools can harness these forces instead of allowing them to define their schools. A successful principal needs to know which forces are in play and how to respond to them. A successful principal will make the effort to ensure the alignment between personal, school and societal purposes of school leadership and to leverage all available forces to serve student learning. Can principals forge better alignment between apparently conflicting demands?
3. To harness the contradictory forces of reform and tradition and reinvent schools as dynamic entities, each school has to engage in learning. Learning should not

only focus on the student and classroom levels, it should be prevalent across organisational levels. Studies (e.g. Hallinger and Heck 1996; Leithwood et al. 2006) show that a principal's influence on student learning tends to be exercised indirectly through the conditions they create and manage. Thus, principals should enable and support teacher learning and ensure they continue to learn themselves. In other words, a leader engages in an ongoing, collective inquiry with others, particularly teachers, to promote student learning (Militello et al. 2009; Robinson 2008). For example, when teachers are confronted by new instructional and pedagogical requirements while exam pressures endure, this can be used as an opportunity for professional debate and discussion to take place on how apparently contradictory forces can be usefully reconciled for the benefit of students, or how schools can internally align curriculum, instruction and assessment.

The bottom line is that, even though the context may confuse and frustrate, successful leaders of learning should try to overcome this within their schools. There is always some room for principals to negotiate approaches to student learning, which may involve, for example, focusing on student-based learning and holistic development in the first 2 years of senior high school and then devoting the final year to exam performance. Can principals use their position to drive change *within* their schools or clusters of schools?

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have attempted to sketch a picture of the challenges principals in China face as leaders of learning. This has generally been portrayed as one of confusion and frustration as a result of trying to serve too many masters. However, as time goes on, the picture may not be as bleak as the one we have painted. Some positive signs are emerging as principals interact with the curriculum reforms.

One of the most telling signs is that the reform has challenged the dominant mindset which positions exams at the centre of student learning. Through being forced to confront the reform demands and different conceptualisations of student learning, change is influencing leadership by stealth. Concepts such as inquiry-based learning, integrated courses, creative thinking and holistic learning are now part of principals' language and, as such, have entered education discourse. The trick now is to convert this discourse into action and cultural change.

It may be that principals and teachers are presently working their way through the initial emotion-loaded phase of change and that real progress lies beneath this state of flux (Yin 2008). Authentic change in schools is inevitably a slow process, and this is especially so when it challenges cultures that are so deeply embedded in the educative psyche. Time will tell, but it may be that the reforms currently making life so uncomfortable for many school leaders will result in more positive learning experiences for students in China.

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Chapter 15
Transforming Singapore Schools: The Economic Imperative, Government Policy and School Principalship

Clive Dimmock and Jonathan W.P. Goh

Introduction

Singapore has gained high recognition internationally over many years for its quality education. According to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMMS) study and international Mathematics and Science Olympiads, its secondary school students continue to be at or near the top of the international league tables. Western governments and educators look admiringly at Singapore's continuing high performance and reflect on the transferability or otherwise of the features that account for its success. A conventional view of Singapore's school system from an outsider's perspective would see it as a strongly centralized system, controlled by the Ministry of Education (MOE) with a top-down bureaucratic structure and processes. This view might also conclude that it is a system predicated on stability and tradition, with disciplined students, and supportive, exam-oriented teachers and parents who attribute the highest priority to academic success.

While considerable global attention has focused on the causes and reasons for Singapore's success, two aspects in particular of the Singapore educational success story remain largely unrevealed. The first aspect concerns the role and contribution of the MOE, since the "conventional" view stated above offers only a partial explanation. For a fuller appreciation we need to go beyond this view to examine in detail the role, function and contribution of the MOE over many decades. The second aspect is the role of principals as school leaders. To date, minimal research has been conducted on their contribution to the educational success of Singapore.

This chapter argues that the MOE – far from being a conservative block to reform and change which might normally be associated with a centralized bureaucracy – has in fact been the main change agent instigating and promulgating it (Gopinathan et al. 2008). Major MOE reform initiatives are recognizable throughout the period of Singapore's independence since 1965. However, it is the profundity of the reforms since the mid-1980s, and particularly their acceleration in the last 15 years

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that are of particular interest. It can also be argued that MOE-instigated reform has been cautious, planned, coherent and well articulated in contrast to the proliferating reform initiatives undertaken by many Western governments during the same period. Given the politico-economic and social conditions of Singapore, and the fact that there has been only one ruling Political Party in Singapore since the nation's foundation in 1965, the government has been able to orchestrate and align changes in the education system to support and reinforce evolving economic policies and priorities.

The second major argument of the chapter is that the role, functions and contribution of principals as school leaders have strongly reflected emerging developments in political, economic and social conditions over time – a ubiquitous thesis proposed by Grace (1995) for the principalship, and which is no less applicable to Singapore over the last 50 years. Since the government of Singapore has shaped these conditions, it has necessarily determined the role and contribution of its school leaders. Principals are senior educational officers of the MOE and have a clear expectation on them to implement MOE policy in their schools. Both of the above arguments are developed in this chapter, which is structured into three parts as follows:

1. The evolution of Singapore's economy over the last 50 years divided into three phases, and the implications of each phase for schools and principals' leadership;
2. Examples of Singaporean innovative curricular practices and the leadership behind them; and
3. The implications of past and current politico-economic-social trends for principals' leadership going forward.

Throughout the last two decades of global educational reforms inspired by neo-liberal measures, reflected in trends toward decentralization and performativity (Angus 2004; Gopinathan 2007; Green 1999; Marginson 1999; Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe 2004), the Singapore government has remained strong and highly interventionist in the nation's economic and social reforms (Gopinathan 2007; Green 2007; Koh 2007). The close interconnections between education and economic growth are apparent in Singapore to an even greater extent than in most developed countries. After all, Singapore has only its people and strategic location – there being no other resources – and so education is seen as the means of developing human capital, with an emphasis on flexibility, versatility and adaptability to meet evolutionary economic needs. A major challenge faced by educational leaders and institutions is thus how to respond innovatively to new demands for developing dynamic skills, competencies, research skills, critical thinking, creative thinking, lifelong learning and e-technologies – while maintaining traditional strengths in math, science and engineering, which are part of the Singapore brand. The implications for curriculum, teaching and learning, pedagogy and assessment and for school leaders are necessarily profound.

It is evident that Singapore's education policy is strongly linked to the development of human capital and that its educational reforms are economically inspired

(Ashton et al. 2002; Kozma 2005). From the beginning of Singapore's modern economic development, the role of education has been unequivocally instrumentalist – to provide a labor force with the necessary knowledge and skills to run an efficient and effective economy. Anticipating the economy's skill needs at different periods has meant the translation of economic requirements into "production goals" for secondary, polytechnic, and university institutions as the nation moved from export-based to high-value-added production, and then to knowledge-based economic development strategies. Indeed, part of the present economic plan includes the development of Singapore as a regional, high quality, educational hub that will contribute directly to the nation's economic growth. As the centrality of Singapore's schools, colleges and universities to the nation's economic welfare grows, and as the education system diversifies and matures – so the importance and contribution of its school leaders increases.

It is impossible to understand the present and to predict the future roles played by MOE and by school leaders in Singapore's educational success, without first appreciating the economic and educational history of Singapore since nationhood in 1965. In this regard, three distinct phases can be recognized (Gopinathan et al. 2008).

Three Phases of Singapore's Economic Growth and Education Reforms

Phase 1: Survival-Driven Education (1965–1978)

Singapore is an island state with a relatively short history, gaining self-governance in 1959, and independence from Malaysia in 1965. In the early days, Singapore's outlook was not promising as the country was characterized by high levels of unemployment, a poorly educated labor force and poor basic housing. Its lack of resources and small domestic market meant that its two million people needed to look to export-led industrialization (Tan 2009b). The Singapore government aimed to attract foreign investment while developing its economic (e.g., transportation and communications) and commercial infrastructures (e.g., banks and research companies). A massive influx of foreign capital between 1965 and 1980 enabled the development of a successful manufacturing base and GDP growth averaged 10% per annum. Human capital in terms of skills and work attitudes was in short supply to accommodate economic strategy. Educational institutions assumed a role of socialization and nation building to develop a Singapore identity (Goh and Gopinathan 2006) that respected values of a multicultural society comprised of Chinese, Malays and Indians. The priority was to provide free and uniform primary education for every child (regardless of race, language, gender, and social status), and instate bilingualism as a key component. While the English language was seen as a utilitarian tool for international trade, there was a danger

that the young might become "deculturalized". Consequently, the learning of mother-tongue languages assured parents that their children would connect to their respective deeply rooted cultures. During the same time, emphasis was placed on the teaching of Mathematics, Science and technical skills to produce technically trained and efficient workers to cope with the country's needs for industrialization. Even today, these strategies remain intact. A fast growing and centralized education system was established with principals reduced to being "supervisors of routine tasks" (Wee and Chong 1990; Gopinathan et al. 2008). Large schools and a shortage of clerical and administrative staff meant that the principal's role embraced these aspects. Tensions between principals and the MOE were frequent.

Phase 2: Efficiency-Driven Education (1978–1997)

As time elapsed, Singapore began to face increased competition from low cost countries in the region, and consequently industrial restructuring became essential. In response, the Singapore government shifted the focus in the 1990s from labor intensive activities to more capital-driven and value-added industries. It also targeted manufacturing industries that were technology-intensive (e.g., computing, aerospace, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology). As the Singapore economy matured, and the forces of globalization and the emergence of China became apparent, it was clear that Singapore needed to diversify to become a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy. It also needed to continue to invest heavily in education as a means of developing human capital. The Asian crisis of 1997 leant further fillip to this trend. During this period, the focus of education policy shifted from quantitative concerns to improving the quality of education and training (Sharpe and Gopinathan 2002). A centralized "teacher-proof" curriculum was adopted and a rigid system of student assessment focused on competence in languages and mathematics led to a strict streaming regime at primary (Years 2–7 equivalent) and secondary (Years 8–11 equivalent) levels. All students were encouraged to complete at least 10 years of education in primary and secondary schools before they were selected for tertiary and post-school level – some going to technical institutes, others to polytechnics and the more academic to universities. In order to implement this complex system, principals were "line managers", expected to ensure the processes and standards determined by the MOE were adhered to. The entire system was efficiency driven, and principals were issued with a "Handbook" of instructions for every eventuality (Gopinathan et al. 2008). Gopinathan et al. (2008) go on to argue that the result was a paternalistic, rigid system that bred a dependency culture on bureaucrats, administrators and policy makers, and a cadre of principals starved of opportunities to take initiatives to address local school problems. One reform, however, stands out as a portent of change to come. In the late 1980s, limited de-regulation by the government allowed a few independent and autonomous schools to be created.

Phase 3: Ability-Driven Education (1997–Present)

As Singapore entered the twenty-first century, it was facing increasing competition for global resources and markets. Its economic strategy needed to shift if it was to remain globally competitive and continue to attract foreign capital flows and investment. Its future now rested on investing further in research- and knowledge-based industries that would drive economic growth well into the new century. Education was again seen as the means of developing the new skill sets and knowledge required. Growth in the service industries, and a liberalization of the financial and telecommunications sectors, plus the rise of a technology-driven environment – all placed a premium on new skills and knowledge that the traditional curriculum could not meet. The potential of computers to aid teaching and learning also began to be realized as was the need for National education and citizenship to bolster loyalties to the nation in the face of globalization. As well, close cooperative relations between the school, the home and the community were endorsed as part of a more active participation of citizens in community life (Kozma 2005, pp. 132–133).

Major implications for education followed from these twenty-first century changes in economic and social conditions. Gopinathan et al. (2008) poignantly describe the questioning that arose (and is on-going) in regard to traditional Singaporean education, with its high centralization, rigid governance and prescribed curriculum:

> If the system needed greater flexibility, more pathways, students to be less risk averse, and teachers not shackled by a prescribed pedagogy driven by high stakes examinations, then leadership and system governance orthodoxies had to change as well. In some systems at least there was a belief that schools had to become learning organizations, that teachers had to become more professional members of learning communities. Newer versions of principals as instructional learners and of distributed leadership began to emerge. (Gopinathan et al. 2008, p. 245)

Consequently, a new strategic perspective was encapsulated in the country's educational mission. In 1997, the Singapore's Ministry of Education (MOE) introduced a series of radical policy initiatives under the educational vision of *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation* (TSLN). The former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong stressed the importance of having a strong culture of thinking and continual learning since:

> [a] nation's wealth in the 21st century will depend on the capacity of its people to learn… It is the capacity to learn that will define excellence in the future, not simply what our young people achieve in school… We want to have an environment where workers and students are all the time thinking of how to improve. Such a national attitude is a must for Singapore to sustain its prosperity. (Goh 1997).

TSLN marked the beginning of what has come to be known as the *Ability-driven* phase of education in Singapore. This saw a significant shift from the traditional efficiency-driven paradigm to one based on students' abilities. Reflecting a shortage of skilled labor, a major premise of the ability-driven paradigm is to nurture every child based on his or her talents and ability through mass customization

(Shanmugaratnam 2004; Teo 2000, 2001, 2002). The aim is to identify and develop the talents and abilities of every child to the maximum (while still within a tightly streamed system), whether the talent was in the intellect, arts, sports, or community endeavors. These recent changes and refinements in Singapore's educational system are focused on creating better opportunities and flexibility in terms of school choice and admissions (Shanmugaratnam 2005).

A key thrust is to exploit the potential of technology and promote students as both consumers and producers of knowledge. The 1997 TSLN initiative was just one of many policy shifts changing educational strategy during the following decade. It was intended that a more process-oriented curriculum approach would be adopted with a more critical and creative thinking culture. A 5-year IT Master Plan was introduced in 1997 – with the aim to create an ICT-rich environment for every child (Mui et al. 2004). In 2002 the MOE launched its Master Plan 2, in tandem with TSLN reforms. IT Master Plan 2 adopted a systemic, holistic approach in which all the key components of the system – ICT, curriculum, assessment, instruction, professional development, and school culture – were integrated (Kozma 2005).

As reported by Gopinathan et al. (2008), a radical departure from the standard "government schools" structure was the introduction of "niche" and specialised independent secondary schools. By 2009, there were 13 independent schools and 17 autonomous schools in a total of 360. Such schools are encouraged to develop a special focus and excellence in their chosen specialism and are generously funded to that end. Four such specialized schools include the Singapore Sports School (established 2004), the NUS High School of Science and Mathematics managed by the National University of Singapore (established 2005), the School of the Arts (established 2007) and the soon-to-be opened School of Science and Technology. These schools cater to gifted, talented students and are able to recruit on a wider scale across Singapore and even overseas. In addition, a few privately run and funded secondary schools and junior colleges have been endorsed as self-funded institutions to cater to expatriates and others, but they have had to conform to MOE policies and have at least 50% Singaporeans. All ordinary neighbourhood secondary schools are being encouraged to become 'niche' school - by offering an extra-curricular specialism normally in the arts, music, drama or sports. The aim has been to add diversity alongside greater flexibility, choice and site autonomy.

Innovations in the secondary curriculum were introduced as early as 2002. Schools with the more talented students involved in the Integrated Program (IP), could follow new curricular pathways – such as by-passing GCE "O" Level. Major structural change in the governance and administration of the school system was also introduced. Singapore was divided into four zones, each of which was headed by a Deputy Director in the MOE. Within each zone, schools were grouped into a number of clusters (normally between 12 and 15 primary and secondary schools form a cluster), each of which had a superintendent in charge. In a move to connect principals and MOE administrators, superintendents were to be successful principals, appointed for 5-year periods, after which they would return to schools as principals. The zonal/cluster reform changed the pattern of responsibilities from specialist-functional area to holistic, so that deputy directors and superintendents were now responsible for all aspects of education in the schools within their remit.

Re-structuring into zones and clusters, thereby creating smaller functional units, was also intended to encourage collaboration between local schools and teachers and promote bottom-up initiatives.

No less a dramatic change in approach – especially for a system predicated on didactic teaching – occurred in 2004, with the launch of the *Teach Less, Learn More* (TLLM) policy. This was designed to encourage teachers to be more creative in their use of teaching strategies and methods, to make full use of computer technology and to switch emphasis away from teaching toward learning. Essentially, student outcomes were to be more focused on twenty-first century skills, such as multicultural and technological literacies. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on processes of learning at the expense of content, and on non-academic outcomes, such as effective communication skills, collaboration with others, self-directed learning and lifelong learning. It was thus not surprising to see many of these emphases being echoed in the recent C2015 (Curriculum 2015) Committee's strategic recommendations.

Development opportunities for principals as key agents in implementing many of the reforms were judged important. An *Academy of Principals* was set up as a professional forum for principals to exchange ideas and practices. A newly established *Teachers' Network* fulfilled the same functions for teachers. The changes and reforms present major challenges for principals, highlighting the need for leadership training. For more than a quarter century, Singapore has been active in management and leadership training – especially for department heads and latterly aspiring principals.

The last 15 years of MOE-led reforms are indicative of a dynamic system constantly reviewing its structures and practices and its functional relationships with other parts of society, most notably, the economy. MOE-led reforms, however, are not peculiar to the last 15 years; rather, they are endemic to the constantly changing landscape of Singapore since independence. But what is perhaps different about the last 15 years is the qualitative nature of the reforms; the serious attempts to seek a new equilibrium between MOE control of strategic direction and execution of its policies, with bottom-up innovations from the schools themselves. The resultant implications for school leaders and teachers are very significant. There is a desire to release and cultivate school energies and initiatives to lead and manage the pedagogical challenges they face. Diversity is being welded on to a strong coherent national school system. As Gopinathan et al. (2008) argue, schools have been asked to be distinctive and to build niche programs; and former tight controls are slowly being eased.

Implications for Principals' Leadership

Prior to Singapore's independence, principals enjoyed considerable autonomy under the decentralized and fragmented post-war British colonial government. This changed in the 1960s, however, as indicated in earlier sections of this chapter, with the new Singapore government imposing a rigid and centrally controlled

management system, which was considered necessary for economic survival and nation building. Principals lost their autonomy and were no more than administrators and line managers of government education policy in a hierarchical system that was responsive to economic imperatives. Paradoxically, after 35 years or more of centralized administration, and as Singapore moved toward the twenty-first century, the loss of principals' autonomy and control, and the extreme degree of supervision considered appropriate for economic growth from the 1960 onwards, proved counterproductive to new emergent economic conditions. While the economy–education relationship remains intact as the crucial nexus – that is, education responds to national economic needs – education reforms are now directed at loosening up the system from its rigid centralized past. A new era of change is being ushered in which in many ways reverses trends in curriculum, pedagogy and leadership of the last 40 years. Today's knowledge-based economy is characterized by swift obsolescence where knowledge-intensive activities contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance (Powell and Snellman 2004). This requires intellectual capital building where knowledge is constantly created and exploited in a dynamically changing future (Shapiro and Varian 1999). These changes in educational policies have significant implications for all stakeholders – school leaders, teachers, students and parents; and schools are charged with the responsibility for nurturing and molding learning and innovating skills in students. School leaders today need to be cognizant of the need and challenges in educating Singapore's "future" citizens to be active and efficient contributors in a knowledge economy that relies heavily on innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial abilities.

Principals are thus facing considerable challenges. First, they are leading change which in many situations is rolling back more than half a century of tradition and custom, values that have become deeply entrenched in the psyche of Singaporean educators, parents and students. Second, the population as a whole is now generally well educated and informed, with a growing "voice" – in a way that was not the case in the 1960s. Third, Singapore's economic growth has brought about greater income disparity between the rich and poor, so that issues of equity and elitism are beginning to surface. Students in the high status schools, attending local universities or the best universities overseas, and occupying the professions are mostly from middle class English-speaking homes.

The foregoing tensions are no less difficult for the MOE. In trying to diversify the system, it must balance autonomy and control. While principals want greater autonomy, the MOE does not want to lose control – after all, it sees itself as having created a world class "brand". Operational rules are still strictly enforced by those in the middle, such as superintendents, who are held to account by their MOE bosses. This makes for considerable principal frustration – on the one hand they are encouraged by rhetoric to exercise initiative; on the other, they feel prevented from so doing by a bureaucracy and chain of command that still exists. While twenty-first century pedagogies and assessment practices are increasingly espoused, the high stakes national examination system remains firmly entrenched. It has the support of parents, after all. And it is still not customary for Singaporeans to challenge authority.

This chapter has so far explained the historical evolution of educational policy from 1965, when the nation was founded, up to the present day. Dominant in this story is the need to survive, that is, the economic imperative, which explains the strong central control over education exerted by the government and MOE. This context, more than any other, explains the role and contribution of principals' leadership during these past 50 years. As pointed out, however, the educational landscape has been dynamic and changing – and has embraced new governance and institutional structures, as well as new curricular, pedagogical and assessment processes. With each of these reforms, a host of challenges have been presented to principals' leadership – no more so than at the end of this first decade of the twenty-first century, when new innovative practices and processes expected of schools, teachers and leaders are being encouraged alongside the more established, traditional practices. It is thus appropriate in the following section to describe some of these innovative current practices in Singapore schools.

Cases of Current Innovative Leadership and Curriculum Practices in Singapore Schools

The school initiatives illustrated in this section exemplify a growing trend of schools beginning to muster their resources and capabilities in different ways to develop new capabilities – with principals at the forefront. Furthermore, innovation is taking place at three levels, namely:

1. School (or organizational) level (e.g., changing school culture and leadership);
2. Teaching level (e.g., communities of practice, professional learning communities, team teaching, and multi-disciplinary teaching or international collaboration projects); and
3. Classroom level (e.g., integrating new technologies and the internet into conventional teaching).

Schools are being innovative in how they build rapport with, and leverage on, their stakeholders, such as government agencies, higher education institutions and business corporations. The MOE has also introduced incentives to promote school innovation. For example, in 1999 the MOE set up the *School Innovation Fund* to encourage school practitioners to trial new ideas in teaching and learning, pupil development and school management. In 2001, the *INNERGY* award was introduced to acknowledge teachers' innovative ideas and projects.

It is clear from the cases below that the quality and success of innovations are shaped by thoughtful school leaders, in whom teachers place their trust. The cases reported reveal principals inspiring their teachers and students, and giving them impetus and ownership over their teaching and learning respectively. In terms of engagement in innovation, however, Singapore schools are still at a developmental and growth stage, and the impetus for change is still largely with the MOE.

The following cases exemplify the principals' role in particular, in leading innovation in curriculum, teaching and learning drawn from a range of primary and secondary schools in Singapore.

The principal of Compassvale Primary School has introduced an integrated curriculum, known as the *Seamless Curriculum* project in Primary 1 and 2. Its aim is to make learning enjoyable, build character and ensure that children attain the necessary academic achievements. The emphasis is on teaching the child important life skills, such as communication and interaction skills.

Similarly, English teachers at St. Stephen's School developed an English Integrated Curriculum in 2006 for Primary 1 to 3 students. While adhering closely to MOE prescribed English Language syllabi, the teachers developed their own curriculum and teaching materials by integrating other subjects such as social studies, art and music. In other words, the teachers do not rely on MOE-recommended English Language textbooks when teaching students. The success of this program has inspired teachers to adopt the same approach for the teaching of English language to higher primary students in the school.

Zhenghua Primary principal, Koh Chin Thong, focuses on developing students holistically through the appreciation for the arts and important values such as graciousness and caring for others. The school is well-known in Singapore for its strong esthetics program, and has won accolades in the performing arts. Every student from primary 1 to 3 goes through a compulsory customized dance curriculum, with the option of pursuing advanced modules in higher primary. The MOE selected the school's programs for the School-Based Excellence (PSE) award in 2006.

Elsewhere, Rivervale Primary School's principal and teachers are known for their curriculum *innovation* and *entrepreneurship* innovation. To nurture innovation and entrepreneurial skills, the school infuses information technology into the curriculum to enhance creativity, and promotes interactivity in developing thinking skills. For instance, students are taught to employ marketing strategies for their project work – including the selling of vegetables grown in the school's own greenhouse. It has set up an Entrepreneurship Club for students to hone their entrepreneurial and public relations skills through working on innovative projects with the community.

The recently retired principal of Hougang Primary School, Goh Ek Piang, is credited with pioneering experiential and authentic learning, particularly as a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Outdoor Adventure Education. Outdoor Adventure Education is weaved seamlessly into different facets of the curriculum so that students can learn many important life skills and values. The curriculum also emphasizes holistic development of the students to be global citizens with a passion for life-long learning and a love for Singapore.

Impressive examples of primary school leadership are to be found in technology education. Rulang Primary is well-known in Singapore for infusing robotics and technologies (such as digital art) into the curriculum. The school has participated actively in numerous national and international robotics competitions and won many awards including gold medals in the International Robot Olympiad 2007.

The school provides a creative, holistic and innovative environment and opportunities to nurture student leaders, entrepreneurs and good citizens. According to former principal, Mdm Lim Lai Yong, the basis for introducing robotics is to cultivate in their students an interest in science and technology, independent learning, problem-solving and creative thinking skills.

Many examples of secondary principals' leadership of innovative projects are to be found. For example, the principal at Jurong Secondary School introduced problem-based authentic learning to Secondary One science students – who were given a problem centered on the new Jurong Lake Park. They worked with the Town Corporation to look into residents' concerns about the development of the Park and the possible effects of park use on flora and fauna. In the process students learnt about separation techniques and qualitative analysis when examining water quality, the impact of human activity on the ecology, studied the design of existing park shelters and applied concepts of heat transfer to propose improvements to them. The principal saw the benefits to students as sharpening their interpersonal skills, research skills, collaboration and problem solving.

A different example of principal-led innovation is provided by the principal of Deyi Secondary School, who started SQMD (Socratic Questioning and Moral Dilemmas) as part of the Values Education program in the school. She claims it helps students think critically, reason analytically and make choices grounded in ethics and positive values. Students are introduced to different types of question to probe assumptions, draw evidence and cite reasons; they learn to seek clarification and develop views from different perspectives, and then to extrapolate possible implications and consequences before making moral judgment. These skills, she states, will stand them in good stead in adult life.

Innovative ICT projects abound in Singapore secondary schools. In each case, the role of the principal as catalyst and enabler has been crucial in implementation. Ngee Ann Secondary School was named among 30 schools in the world as a "Pathfinder School" by Microsoft as part of the company's Partners in Learning (PiL) scheme – a US$500 million (S$700 million) initiative set up in 2003 to improve education through the use of technology and training. Ngee Ann Secondary is the first school in Singapore to earn "Pathfinder School" status, the second highest level of recognition given by Microsoft to schools (the highest being a "Mentor School" which is given to 12 schools around the world each year). Students in the school are encouraged to use their mobile phones and social networking programs (such as *Twitter* and *MSN Messenger*) during lessons to enhance learning. PiL director James Bernard credited the school's principal Mr. Adrian Lim for his commitment in looking at new ways to enhance student learning and creating an environment where teachers can thrive and innovate (Tan 2009a). The principal is a strong proponent of educators needing to change their mindsets in how they teach students, arguing that today's students are used to receiving information on their mobile phones instantaneously and in multimedia forms rather than by textbooks. As a result of Ngee Ann Secondary's commitment to the use of technology in teaching and learning, it was selected as one of the *Centers of Excellence in Infocomm Technology* in 2007.

Likewise, school leadership at Hwa Chong Institution (formerly known as Chinese High School) is committed to the school being at the forefront of learning technologies. Being an affluent independent school, it is not constrained by lack of resources. Students are required to use IT to create innovative "products", such as the Electronic Link Forum, where they use communication software that includes email, group messages and file-sharing to facilitate discussion on the designing of a business plan for their "products" (Borja 2004). In a further example of innovative curriculum activity, Hwa Chong principal, senior and middle leaders supported students in 2008 in organizing a model ASEAN Summit – held in the school – to which students from all ASEAN countries were invited as "delegates". Students were expected to make speeches, table, pass and reject motions and simulate a real ASEAN Summit. Internationalizing the curriculum in this way, and bringing together students from different cultures to achieve a common purpose, brings unique benefits. Not only do they gain experience of making speeches and conducting themselves in a dignified way, but they also learn about the role and function of ASEAN and the economics and politics underpinning it.

A further example – Crescent Girls' School – is a leading school with excellent teaching and learning practices leveraging on IT. Each student is given a tablet personal computer for study and research. In 2008, the school became one of the six selected Singapore schools to embark on FutureSchool@Singapore, an initiative by the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) and MOE, to incubate novel education ideas that harness ICT. As a testament to the school's efforts, the school was declared by Microsoft at the 2007 Global Leaders Forum as "Mentor School" for schools of the future around the world. Crescent Girls now mentors innovative schools in 12 countries under the Worldwide Microsoft Innovative Schools Program. The school's principal, Mrs. Eugenia Lim feels that it is necessary to continually blaze new trails for their students to discover new opportunities in their learning.

The examples cited above show in a very real way principals encouraging and working with teachers to innovate in curriculum, teaching and learning. The MOE – through ministerial speeches and funding initiatives, and annual school awards for excellence and merit – is gradually changing the culture from one of centralized dependence to one where central guidance is combined with school-based innovation and initiative in curriculum and pedagogy.

Discussion and Implications

What are the conclusions and implications for education and principal leadership to be drawn from the last 40 to 50 years of Singapore's politico-economic history? Clearly, the economy and education system have mutually reinforced each other's extraordinary success? First, the economic imperative to survive after nationhood in 1965 has led to major periodic shifts in economic structure to keep abreast and ahead of the world and global market trends. After all, Singapore has no choice – its

only resource is human capital. These evolutionary and successful changes in the economic base have been enhanced by facilitating conditions, such as the smallness of Singapore, and the extent to which government has control over most aspects of political, economic and social life. Tighter alignment and implementation across policy fronts and within policy arenas has thus been more possible than in larger and perhaps more "democratic" countries.

Unquestionably, the stand-out feature has been the enlightenment of the Singapore government during this time. Its control over society does not necessarily guarantee effective and efficient change management, yet that is what Singapore has achieved. Government vision and leadership, notably that of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, the founding prime minister, has transformed the nation from an underdeveloped society in the 1960s to a developed, First World country today. Moreover, while it has achieved this by strong centralized control, it has also for the most part done it by winning the hearts and minds of its people. It has firmly established a culture of success, of prosperity, of competitiveness and wanting to be first. The strong harmony and unity that have characterized Singaporean society over the last 40 years are still pervasive today.

Singapore's appetite for economic success and its consequent periodic economic transformations have in turn driven reform and change in its education and schooling. The latter are seen to be in direct instrumental relationship with the former. The supply of suitably skilled human capital to business, technology and manufacturing, the services sector, and most recently to education itself, is seen – by government and the people – as axiomatic in the continued growth and prosperity of Singapore. Consequently, the government and increasingly private organizations, invest heavily in schools, colleges, and universities. After all, they are prerequisites for the future supply of human capital to fuel continued economic success. Continuously high funding levels and investment in education convey the huge importance that Singapore government and society place in schools and educational institutions, and their teachers and leaders.

Recent measures introduced by the MOE to relax the degree and extent of centralized control over the running of schools are bound to create disequilibrium in what has been a stable system. A new order of relationships and roles is required, where principals, school leaders and teachers are more proactive in their fostering of innovation in their schools, while still following the guidelines of a centralized system. The current period is a time of experiment and trial for both the MOE and principals; the former wondering to what extent it can safely let go, the latter unsure of the degree to which they can exercise their discretion and latitude. Tensions at the boundary of the MOE–principal interface are thus to be expected. With time and experience, and both parties testing and exploring the new relationship, a new dynamic will be created. There will be no compromise, however, on the successful Singapore "brand" of education.

What does this new order herald for schools and principals? First, the Singapore government and society in general, have realized the benefits that flow from growing leaders and leadership. Short of qualified human capital and with a small population of less than 5 million, Singapore has adopted a policy of encouraging skilled

migration to meet its demand for labor and boost its economy. There is recognition that its current and future success depends on entrepreneurs, risk takers and innovators. Many of these qualities are embedded in leaders and leadership. Abilities such as taking decisions and initiatives, being creative and critical in thinking, and problem solving are qualities found in leaders. There is a sense that the centralized regulated system of the past may have bred a strong, dependency culture based on hierarchical authority rather than school-based leadership. The significance and challenge of this for present school leaders is the importance of their modeling leadership and building leadership capacity at all levels in their communities – starting with students and teachers. It is commonplace nowadays to find even primary schools allocating curriculum time to nurturing leadership and character development skills, even among students.

In a similar vein, as the work of schools becomes more complex and expectations of schools more demanding, principals are increasingly expected to share or distribute more of their management and leadership responsibilities among their staff. This may not be easy for many Singaporean principals, given the traditional hierarchical patterns of power and decision making pervading Asian societies and organizations. A major challenge for Singaporean principals is thus how and to what extent their leadership styles change and evolve in their school communities over the coming years. Moreover, pressure on the ways in which principals exercise power and responsibility is not just from within the school and the system. There are equally compelling external forces – notably growing parental influence, supported by a government policy of more flexibility, diversification and choice – that are forcing a re-balancing of school–home and principal–parent relationships.

Offering greater diversity of educational provision in terms of school type, specialism and niche, as well as more varied curricula and curricular pathways, pedagogies and forms of assessment, are prerequisites for parents and students to exercise more choice. But they also have important implications for principals and their leadership. First, the greater the differences between schools, the larger will be the range of school contexts in which principals are expected to lead, and as a consequence, the more heterogeneity in the role of principal. This raises questions such as – to what extent will the nature and form of the principalship remain the same or become different in Singapore? Will aspiring principals have greater opportunity to influence the decision on the type of school to which they are allocated as principals? Will the MOE – who appoints and allocates principals to schools – need to select and place principals ever more sensitively to achieve "fit", taking account of the specificities of context, community and type of school before making principal career decisions? Will certain types of school require principals with special expertise, training and dispositions?

There are also implications for the supply of school leaders, and their preparation and development. How might the creation of greater diversity among schools and the principalship affect the present supply of and demand for, leaders? Many systems at present, including Singapore, face a shortage of teachers opting for leadership positions, from middle level through to principal. Will special, niche and different types of school lead to a resurgence of potential and willing leaders,

or will their existence exacerbate the present shortage? Moreover, will present strategies to grow and distribute leadership in schools actually increase or decrease the flow of teachers putting themselves forward for senior leadership positions in future? Further questions may be raised, too, about the need for leader preparation and development programs to be more nuanced, specialized and focused to meet the needs and characteristics of particular types of school and their leadership requirements. The "one size fits all" programs of the past and present may begin to look increasingly obsolete.

What is abundantly clear is that pressure is building – a process that began in the 1990s – for Singapore schools to introduce fundamental changes to curricula, teaching and learning, and assessment. Researchers and policy makers, as well as many in the teaching profession are increasingly speaking with one voice in calling for less reliance on didactic teaching and rote memorizing, and the adoption of a more expansive range of pedagogies and learning approaches befitting the twenty-first century. These involve the greater use of technologies and constructivist approaches, as well as more formative assessment strategies across the school system. However, high-stakes testing and examining remain firmly entrenched, supported by powerful stakeholders. Thus the key question going forward is how the two elements of traditional high-stakes testing and more innovative teaching and learning can co-exist.

The implications of these trends and tensions play firmly into the hands of principals and school leaders. Already, there is evidence of the MOE espousing instructional leadership as a key focus of the principal's role in future. Predictably, principals and senior school leaders will be catalysts, expected to oversee and promote changes in their colleagues' teaching behaviors and practices. They will be expected to inspire, nurture and develop more professional approaches to teaching, learning and assessment in their schools. A premium will be placed on principals as promoters, facilitators and implementers of government and school-generated policies and practices aimed at improving the learning of all teachers, students and leaders.

A stronger, more explicit leadership-for-learning role of principals is not the only predictable re-focusing of the principal role in future. As hinted above, principals will need to re-conceptualize what their schools are about, and as a consequence change their activities and practices. Rather than schools being seen as organizations focused just on student learning, they will increasingly be viewed as professional learning communities for all stakeholders – students, teachers, parents, school leaders and other community members. Alongside principals as leaders of learning is the notion of principals' developing professional learning communities (PLCs), especially but not exclusively for teachers. Questions arise as to the form that PLCs might take and how leaders best support and resource them. Singapore principals will certainly need to re-engage with teachers, pedagogy and effective teaching and learning research – if they have become preoccupied with administration.

Principals as "leaders of learning," and "creators of PLCs," reinforces a twenty-first century view of leadership centering on capacity building. This emerging view

of leadership endorses holistic and community perspectives of principals' and school leaders' roles. In the Singaporean context, certain things are "givens": new ideas, concepts and practices will be carefully considered and evaluated before being adopted. The government will be behind the whole process and will be driven by what it thinks is in the best interests of the economy and society. But once adopted, the practices will be implemented with an alignment, purpose and energy that few other systems can match. Lingering questions remain, however: How will the emerging and re-configuring boundary relationship between Ministry and principals unfold in years to come? How will new conceptions of teaching, learning and assessment be introduced alongside high-stakes testing and the imperative of retention and maintenance of the Singapore education "brand"? How will leadership distribution patterns within schools be reconfigured? Singapore principals and school leaders – along with Government – will hopefully have an important part to play in how these issues are addressed.

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Chapter 16
Internal and External Accountability: Building Evidence-Informed Leadership Capacity at All System Levels*

John M. Burger, Anna Nadirova, Jim Brandon, Bob Garneau, and Chris Gonnet

Introduction

This chapter considers leadership standards at the district and school levels drawing on data provided with the help of the Provincial Department of Education. Evidence-informed decision-making is explicated within a multifaceted, adaptive leadership framework that is currently evolving in the province of Alberta, Canada.

Improving learning for *all* K-12 students in the public education system and preparing them for the twenty-first century world of work and/or post-secondary studies undoubtedly epitomises one of the most comprehensive "adaptive problems"

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*The views expressed in this chapter are those of the authors and not necessarily their employing organizations.

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that do not entail clear-cut solutions where the answers are known in advance (Heifetz et al. 2004). These types of problems cannot be resolved by merely throwing money at them or by externally imposed changes by a single authority. First, educational issues are dynamic both time-wise and context-wise. One example of complexity is the rapidly evolving diversity of contemporary student populations and the comprehensive educational environments which arise as a consequence. This may encompass English as a Second Language (ESL) learners from a variety of cultural backgrounds and grade levels, low socio-economic status (SES) students in city core schools or Aboriginal or other minority students in both urban and rural schools. Second, public education is influenced by multiple stakeholders with differing interests, perspectives, values, attitudes and agendas. However, all schools share a fundamental interest in solving major challenges such as closing achievement gaps, increasing high school completion, and ensuring school improvement. The goal is policy congruence which is focused on progress and seeks solutions.

Balancing contradictions, prioritising and directing joint efforts at identifying and meeting common goals would not be possible without development of a flexible, responsive, adaptive and systemic leadership framework. Such a leadership framework needs to be "nested" whereby school districts' major educational goals are aligned with general provincial or state educational initiatives and priorities, but at the same time account for the specifics and unique needs arising from local contexts.

Grass roots school leadership systems should similarly be nested within the districts' leadership frameworks, keeping an eye on overall district goals while initiating school level solutions. School results are then considered in relation to district and provincial/state comparators as one means of judging degrees of success being achieved. Adaptive leadership frameworks or systems presume flexibility, transparency and openness to all educational stakeholders and the public. In this way public and stakeholder opinions as to educational priorities, goals and solutions can be heard and accountability processes put in place to inform progress.

Leadership capacity building presumes continuous dialogue provoking debate, encouraging new thinking, reflection and learning and mobilising all stakeholders to work towards a solution (Heifetz et al. 2004). As Fullan (2006: 95–96) has observed:

> Centralized high stakes accountability schemes have failed to produce ownership, as has decentralized site-based management. The solution, in my view, is to develop strategies that integrate top-down and bottom-up forces in an ongoing, dynamic manner, achieving what I call 'permeable connectivity'… [that] requires a sophisticated and delicate balance, because to work it requires all three levels – school, community and district, and state – to interact regularly across and within levels.

One of the challenges of building school and district leadership capacity is the differing degree of "readiness" and preparedness of various education stakeholders (including schools) to actively lead locally, while connecting with the broader leadership framework. Another major issue is grounding contemporary leadership frameworks in firm empirical evidence, so that on-going learning and decisions are rooted in accurate and timely data as to current and emerging student needs, goal

setting, strategies and potential solutions. In other words, effective leadership frameworks should be supported by comprehensive and relevant system-wide data systems. These data systems should incorporate the accountability component, including student assessment and high school completion data. Comprehensive assessment data – summative and formative – generated externally through standardised tests as well as internal teacher assessment promote transparency, reporting student academic outcomes to schools, districts, school councils and parents, as well as encouraging active engagement of students and parents in assessment processes. Systematically (e.g., annually) collected rich student assessment data also make it possible to improve programme evaluation (e.g., ESL or special needs), allow trend analysis of students' progress and support critical reflection on what works best to maximize student success.

A comprehensive education data system should also be able to capture the complex of factors which affect student learning. This means accounting for a broad array of environmental factors, the variety of educational, socio-economic and cultural settings and the dynamic of the education systems in which learning takes place. Examples of relevant value-added variables include student gender, special needs and ESL status, school starting age, student mobility (e.g., changed school registrations), school size, urban–rural school location, teacher experience and retention, programme or course specifics and socio-economic factors such as average family income, percentage of children in single-parent families, percentage of families in owned dwellings, parents' education and mother tongue.

We'll next consider on-going work in Alberta on how superintendent/central office leadership processes can be structured to take optimal advantage of data-rich evidence to set new directions at school district level to improve student learning.

The Changing Leadership Context

Educational leadership in Alberta, across Canada and in most of the Western world is at a crossroads in the early years of the twenty-first century, facing unprecedented risks and opportunities. There are concerns that traditional notions of the school leader's role, conceived for needs of the past, are no longer appropriate for the challenges that school leaders are, and will be, encountering in the foreseeable future. Since the early 1980s, the context of school leadership in Alberta has dramatically changed with increased decentralisation, school autonomy, parental and community influence, shared decision-making, outcomes-based assessment and school choice. The rationale for these reforms is the belief that, through greater autonomy and accountability, school leaders can better respond to local needs and expectations. As a consequence of these changes, school leaders' workloads have become increasingly complex and potentially onerous with more sophisticated administrative and managerial responsibilities and greater accountability for results.

While school leaders are challenged to devote sufficient time and attention to instructional leadership their need to focus on managerial and administrative duties has resulted in many new leaders lacking the knowledge, skills and confidence related to this critically important role. In light of the increasingly large number of new teachers, the result of increasing rates of teacher attrition and retirements, principals as instructional leaders need to develop and refine their knowledge of effective teaching and learning practices to enable them to:

- Supervise and evaluate teacher practice
- Conduct and arrange for mentoring and coaching of teachers
- Plan teacher professional development
- Orchestrate teamwork and cooperative instruction (e.g., professional learning communities).

At the same time, school leaders are experiencing a significant turnover as a consequence of escalating rates of retirement and attrition. Current recruitment efforts are often inadequate, given the prevailing perceptions of teachers regarding the significant challenges and limited rewards of school leadership. The Department has recently concluded research on the supply and demand of school leaders in Alberta over the next few years. Some recent data, and the implications that follow, are:

- 48% of practicing school leaders (i.e., principals and assistant, associate and vice principals) are over 50 years of age; the average age of retirement of school leaders is 57 years
- 45% of school leaders have less than 6 years' experience in the role
- One of the largest urban school authorities reported that:

    – The average age of retiring principals is dropping
    – Approximately one-third of active principals have less than 3 years' experience in the role
    – Approximately half of active assistant, associate and vice principals have less than 3 years' experience in the role

- School authorities are reporting that the number and quality of applicants for school leadership are dropping, with some remote districts reporting unfilled school leadership positions
- 78% of practicing teachers in Alberta were women; the proportion of females in teaching and school leadership is projected to increase.

There are some notable differences between the knowledge, skills and attributes required of school leaders a generation ago and those required now. Given the increasingly complex work context, the school leader's role today may be beyond what most practitioners can fulfill successfully. New models of school leadership practice and related preparation and professional development opportunities need to be developed to ensure that school leaders are able to respond effectively to current and future educational demands. Educational researchers and policy makers have embraced a new vision and model of distributed school leadership (Spillane and Diamond 2007; Leithwood et al. 2009), concluding that traditional approaches to school leaders'

preparation, professional development and practice are no longer relevant to the leadership of a new and challenging era. Education stakeholders in Alberta recognise the need to develop strategies which will support the development of required competencies by new school leaders. Alberta's education stakeholder organisations are committed to undertaking immediate and sustained action in this regard.

Similar changes and challenges are affecting educational leadership at the system level. Rapid personnel turnover within the province's 62 school districts is evidenced by the fact that 23 new Chief Executive Officers have been appointed between 2007 and 2010. Comparable numbers are reflected in the ranks of other system educational leaders: deputy, associate and assistant superintendents as well as positions such as directors, supervisors and coordinators. Rapid changes in student demographics, advancing technological shifts, increasing politicisation at school system level, the press for enhanced data management and greater accountability are all increasing the demand load and expectations on those attempting to exert influence on student learning.

Evidence-Informed Frameworks for School and System Leadership Success in Alberta

Over the first decade of the twenty-first century significant steps have been taken to address changing leadership in the province of Alberta. Through the collaborative efforts of education partners, two overlapping leadership frameworks have been developed as vehicles for coherent, coordinated leadership capacity development at school and system levels. Both frameworks have capitalised on the growing body of evidence that connects leadership to student learning (Leithwood 2008). Similarly, the Wallace Foundation maintains that "behind excellent teaching and excellent schools is excellent leadership" (2006, p. 1). This observation is supported by a recent Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study of education systems in 22 countries that concludes "leadership is essential to improve efficiency and equity of schooling" (Pont et al. 2008, p. 2).

This section traces the recent evolution of these evidence-informed frameworks and the emergence of a vision of school leadership nested within highly successful school systems. The *Alberta Commission on Learning* (Alberta Learning 2003), after examining the state of school leadership in Alberta and reviewing international research on educational leadership, recommended that a principal quality practice standard be developed. It would comprise clearly stated knowledge, skills and attributes for school leaders as the basis for a provincial school leader preparation programme, to be developed. Alberta's Department of Education subsequently created a stakeholder advisory committee to develop a standards document that would define the role of school leaders in the twenty-first century. The Department sponsored a School Leadership Symposium in April 2008, inviting delegates from within and outside the education community, focusing on the current state of school

leadership in Alberta. Delegates, in acknowledging the critical role that principals play in education reform initiatives and in fostering quality student learning, came up with 22 suggestions related to:

- The attraction, recruitment and retention of school leaders
- The evolving role of school leaders
- Accessible, quality school leadership preparation programmes
- Ongoing professional development of school leaders
- A new vision for school leadership in the twenty-first century.

Delegates also recommended that the Department develop a school leadership framework to guide school leadership preparation, professional development programmes and policies. In March 2009, the Department issued the *Principal Quality Practice Guideline* (Alberta Education 2008a) developed by the stakeholder advisory committee. It outlines seven dimensions of school leadership, with descriptors of effective practice for each dimension, providing a common language and role description for education stakeholders in developing their school leadership programmes, policies and practices.

Alberta School Leadership Framework

The committee realised that the Principal Quality Practice Guideline would require new strategies and stakeholder roles in support of school leaders. The committee convened in January 2009 to develop the *Alberta School Leadership Framework* (ASLF) to meet this need. The ASLF elements focus on school leaders' preparation, induction and ongoing professional development. The ASLF also includes a provincial policy on school leadership growth, supervision and evaluation including the distinct but complementary roles of educational stakeholders in supporting school leadership.

Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action

The Department's *Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action* is a 5-year (2009–2014) strategic plan consisting of 13 Strategic Actions to attract, develop and retain teachers and school leaders. Strategic Action 10 focuses on the development of the framework. Once the framework for action is finalised, the Department's Workforce Planning Branch will address the workforce issues related to attraction, recruitment and retention of school leaders. The required *Professional Practice Competencies for School Leaders* and the *School Leader Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy* will serve as a valuable stimulus in attracting teachers to the ranks of school leaders and in accelerating the acquisition and refinement of the required competencies.

The College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) Practice Standard

The origins of two documents that guide leadership practice at the school district level can also be traced to the work of the Alberta Commission on Learning (Alberta Learning 2003). The College of Alberta School Superintendents (2002) submitted a paper to the Commission, *2032: A Standard of Excellence for Public Education in Alberta* advocating a principal quality practice standard and calling for a similar standard of practice for its members, system education leaders. A year-long development process was initiated in the fall of 2007 and was modelled after the multi-stakeholder, evidence-informed approach set out in the *School Leadership Framework.* Not surprisingly, a variety of sources and existing leadership standards were consulted. Notable among these were: the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) *Standards for School Leaders* (1996), the Alberta Teachers' Association's (ATA) *Quality Leadership Standard* (2004) and the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) *Quality Standards of Practice for School Principals* (2004), *Professional Standards for the Superintendency*, American Association of School Administrators (1993) and similar documents from the British Columbia Superintendents' Association (1998) as well as the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents in Saskatchewan (1999).

The first of the two system-level leadership guiding documents, the *CASS Practice Standard* (2008), is designed to inform the individual CASS member's leadership practice in a manner congruent with the *Principal Quality Practice Guideline* (Alberta Education 2008a). In this respect, the leadership constructs that underpin school and system-level documents overlap considerably. Five of the eight *CASS Leadership Dimensions* (Relationships, Vision, Instructional Leadership, Management and Organization, and External Influences) closely resemble the five Principal Quality Practice Guideline *Dimensions* (Relationships, Vision, Instructional Leadership, Managing Operations and Resource, and Larger Societal Context). While the scale and the proximity to teaching and learning vary quite significantly, it is clear that school leadership is nested within the conception of school system leadership articulated in the *CASS Practice Standard.*

The CASS Framework for School System Success

The second system-level educational leadership guidance document, the *CASS Framework of School System Success* (2009), further extends the metaphor of school leadership nested within the practice of high performing school systems. In conjunction with the Department of Education, four universities and several education partners, the College of Alberta School Superintendents is collaboratively implementing a framework to support system-wide improvement and to build the leadership capacity of its members. The CASS framework focuses on the qualities of high performing school

districts and is conceived as an "artful" synthesis of the best available research evidence, combined with the wisdom and experience of practising superintendents.

The beginnings of the CASS framework and the evidence dimensions supporting it were presented at the CASS *Moving and Improving* symposium (April 8, 9, 23, 2008) by Ken Leithwood. In total, approximately 100 participants, representing a broad range of CASS members and partner organizations, participated in the symposium and through small group discussions, provided their thoughts and feedback regarding the dimensions of a proposed *Framework*. As noted by Leithwood, "Most fields informed by the social sciences have imperfect evidence available to inform their practices. So judgements are rightly based on the best available evidence, along with the practical wisdom of those actually working in the field" (Leithwood et al. 2004). This "artful" union of available data, research evidence and informed and reflective practice provides the anchor point for the draft Framework.

Leithwood's (2008) review indicates that there are at least 12 common foci of district-level strategic action identified in the literature on district efforts to improve student learning. In Leithwood's view, these represent the defining characteristics of high performing school districts, according to evidence currently available:

1. District-wide sense of efficacy
2. District-wide focus on student achievement and the quality of instruction
3. Adoption and commitment to district-wide performance standards
4. Development/adoption of district-wide curricula and approaches to instruction
5. Alignment of curriculum, teaching and learning materials, and assessment to relevant standards
6. Multi-measure accountability systems and system-wide use of data to inform practice, to hold school and the district leaders accountable for results, and to monitor progress
7. Targeted and phased focus on improvement
8. Investment in instructional leadership development at the school and district levels
9. District-wide job-embedded professional development focus and supports for teachers
10. District-wide and school-level emphasis on teamwork and professional community
11. New approaches to board-district and in district-school relations
12. Strategic engagement with state reform policies and resources.

In the 2009 version of the CASS framework, these research findings combine with the contextually grounded insights of practitioners to yield the following five *Themes* and 11 *Dimensions* of collective system leadership practice, considered to have the greatest impact on student learning:

Vision and Direction Setting

1. District-wide focus on student achievement
2. Targeted and phased focus on school improvement
3. Strategic engagement with the government's agenda for change and associated resources

Organization Design and Alignment

1. Infrastructure alignment

Capacity Building – Developing People

1. District-wide sense of efficacy
2. Investing in instructional leadership
3. District-wide, job embedded professional development for leaders and teachers

Relationship Building

1. Building and maintaining good relations
2. Engaging parents

The Primacy of Curriculum and Instruction – Managing Instruction

1. Approaches to curriculum and instruction
2. Use of evidence for planning, organizational learning and accountability

This section has charted the recent development of evidence-informed leadership frameworks being developed in Alberta. Together the frameworks described above provide support to school and system leaders as they strive to overcome numerous obstacles in their efforts to support high quality teaching and highly engaged learning. Together these frameworks promote research and evidence-informed (data), contextually responsive educational leadership and a vision of school leadership nested within highly successful school systems.

Multiple Roles in Evidence-Informed Leadership

Fullan's concept of "permeable connectivity" requires a delicate balance between Departments of Education and field-based staff in ways that capitalise on each sector's peculiar strengths. For example, the Alberta Department of Education in 2000 created the System Improvement Group (SIG)[1] within the Accountability and Reporting Division. The SIG focused on research and evaluation projects designed to improve the effectiveness of the basic education system. The SIG together with other branches in the Department plays a key role in establishing networks focused on developing leadership for school improvement. The value of these networks lies in making connections between university researchers and other stakeholders, adding value to the critical enquiry into what works in school improvement.

Stakeholders are becoming increasingly aware that a solid, common (provincial or state) empirical database would add objectivity to the discussions,

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[1] The Accountability and Reporting Division was reorganized and the System Improvement Group was disbanded as of April 1, 2010 as a function of a downsizing of the Alberta Department of Education.

information exchanges and decision-making underlying increasingly complex education challenges. Data already collected such as classroom assessments or surveys, for example, can be combined with other data sources, for example, external assessments and census data, to create comprehensive system-wide databases. These databases can be further developed and refined to provide information for a broad variety of initiatives, including enhanced programme evaluations, school improvement, education policies and leadership decisions. The province or state then has to assume an instrumental role in ensuring quality student data collection (including registration, course participation, achievement and demographics). The school-generated accountability data should be enriched by additional data and returned back to districts' and schools' use or in the form of analytical reports as "value-added" feedback. It is important to emphasise that information flows between various elements and levels of the education system, and building data-centric province or state-wide improvement systems (Kline 2009) assumes not only quality data collections and maintenance, but an *understanding and active usage* of data at all system levels.

Next we provide brief highlights of the steps taken in building a solid data system and using it to answer some key questions. The majority of examples are based on the Grand Prairie School District, which takes an active stance (as described later) in using a broad spectrum of local and provincial data in the decisions aimed at improving students' learning and outcomes.

Building an Empirical Base: Comprehensive and Balanced Provincial/State Data Systems

Alberta invests in external provincial achievement tests (PATs) in Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3, 6 and 9 and, additionally, in Social Studies and Science in grades 6 and 9. These tests provide reliable and valid data to education decision-makers, but they do have some limitations. These have to do with the extent to which they are able to inform the context of programme evaluation in relationship with school improvement. For example, the data do not cover all grades and approximately 10% of the student population does not take the provincial achievement tests due to a variety of circumstances such as absence or being excused from writing the tests.

A new initiative, the Grade Level of Achievement – Reporting project (GLA) (Alberta Education 2003) was designed to be a highly efficient approach to evaluating education programmes at multiple levels of the education system (classroom, school, district and province) by aggregating teacher-generated classroom assessment data and providing value-added analysis to the generated data sets (Alberta Education 2010). Initially the primary objective of the GLA initiative was to systematically access rich, contiguous, classroom-based student achievement data to evaluate specific programmes designed to improve student achievement, such English as a Second Language (ESL) and special education funding, as well as a

range of specific, earmarked funded initiatives focused on literacy. As the GLA initiative evolved, it became apparent that there was greater potential to support system improvement by stimulating analysis of GLA and associated variables at the district and more importantly, at the school level. The need for this type of data connectivity was reinforced by the recently released U.S. Department of Education study, *Implementing Data-Informed Decision-Making in Schools-Teacher Access, Supports and Use*. This study is an excellent summary of the benefits and challenges that characterise data-informed decision-making in schools and observed (2009: viii) that, "the integration of classroom and state assessment data in the same electronic system is not common, even in case study districts noted for their data systems and data-using culture." The fact that Alberta is building data systems that support connectivity between external and classroom-based assessments provides opportunities to observe the practical applications of more holistic approaches to data access, use, comprehension and interpretation.

The GLA data are available for all students in grades 1–9 and thus provide for a much more continuous picture of student achievement than periodic PATs. Additionally, the GLA data are premised on all of the assessment work that teachers engage in with their students over the course of the entire school year. So, typically, the classroom teacher may be drawing on a broad range of assessment methods (e.g., selected response, constructed response, performance assessment and personal communications and observation) as well as on a higher frequency of assessments to inform his or her professional judgment of the students' achievement level. The fact that Alberta has a standard provincial curriculum allows relatively consistent reporting of Grade Level of Achievement in relationship to the general and specific curricular outcomes in the Alberta Department of Education (2009) *Program of Studies*.

The Alberta Department of Education is working on evolving an increasingly holistic and balanced approach to using student achievement data by providing key value-added data, both external and internal, an important resource for school-based and central office-based education leaders. GLA data are collected and added to the corporate data warehouse where the data can be aligned with pre-existing student level data in ways that permit field-based staff to consider and answer a broad array of questions regarding factors that appear most salient in influencing students' achievement. An example of the questions generating from value-added GLA analysis include a comparative examination of GLA and provincial achievement test (PAT) results (see Fig. 16.1).

The opportunity to juxtapose GLA and PAT outcomes for students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 enables a more comprehensive student assessment model as compared to examining PATs only. If school or district patterns vary substantially from provincial data then the important question to answer is why such large discrepancies are observed, in order to ensure students are being well served by both sources of measurement. When GLA and PAT data are compared at the provincial level some interesting patterns emerge. The above graphs reveal increased discrepancies in Mathematics achievement measures with grade level, and hence potentially increasing bias in classroom-based assessment data. Sections that follow contain more specific examples of data reporting and their implications, including both GLA

Mathematics -Grade 3

- PAT & GLA below (n=1,246)
- PAT below & GLA at or above (n=3,013)
- PAT Acceptable or Excellent & GLA below (n=988)
- PAT Acceptable or Excellent and GLA at or above (n=30,262)
- PAT Excused & GLA Below (n=953)
- PAT Excused & GLA at or above (n=1,115)

Mathematics -Grade 6

Mathematics -Grade 9
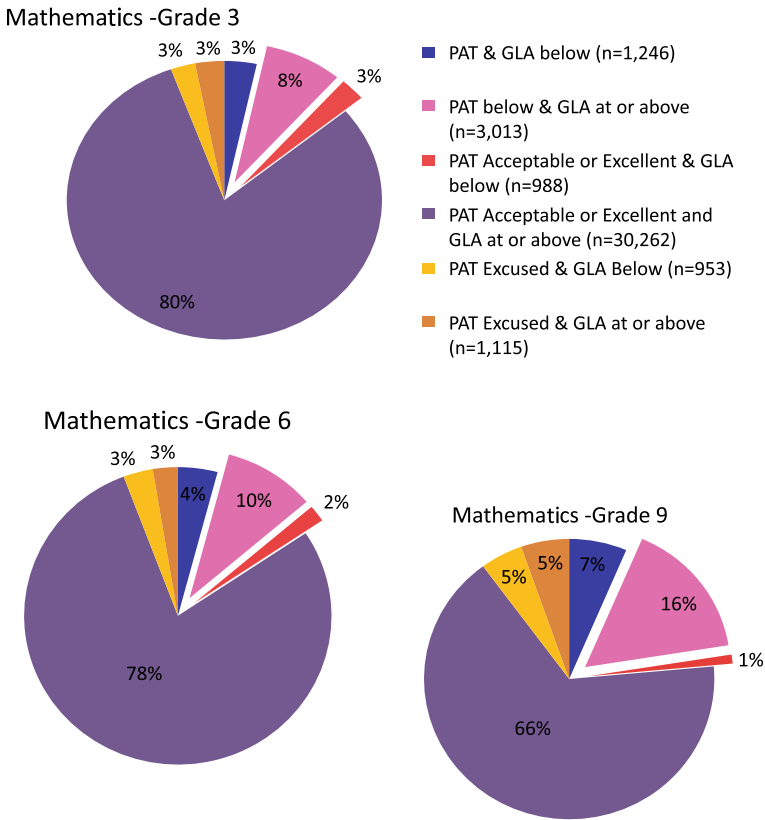
Fig. 16.1 Comparison of PAT and GLA results in mathematics – provincial data

data, which are reported for grades 1 through 9, and high school data (grades 10 through 12). GLA data have been fully implemented, provincially over the last 2 years and therefore did not yet generate enough information for trend analysis and examining implications for high school completion.

From Theory to Practice: A Case Study of the Grande Prairie Public School District

Local Contexts and Educational Leadership

The Grande Prairie Public School District operates 14 schools with a total population of approximately 6,500 students in the City of Grande Prairie, Alberta. The community has experienced significant changes due to the transformation from a largely agricultural economic base to a resource-based economy with natural gas and oil

exploration/production and forestry becoming the dominant economic drivers. Since 1999 the district's student enrolment has grown by 20% and 10-year projections foresee continued rapid growth with the student enrolment increasing by 30% to 9,500 students.

These factors are important to this case study because the tremendous growth of Grande Prairie has also influenced student learning and achievement in the district. Many stressors have been placed on the system in order to maintain pace with the growth. Student achievement, engagement and retention have posed significant challenges. The district has changed from a sedate, remote, rural, small town school system to one of Alberta's next metro school systems. Consequently the Grande Prairie Public School District needed to challenge many of its core values, beliefs and structures, and implement strategic changes that were going to be sustainable in a rapidly transforming environment in order to improve student learning and academic performance.

Little changes and tweaks were not going to address some of the systemic challenges being experienced. Given the magnitude of the changes the district was confronted with, it was extremely important that its systemic change plan was based on solid data, educational research and current best practices. Albert Einstein once stated "We can't solve our problems of tomorrow by using the same kind of thinking we used to create the problems of today." The research and work of Michael Fullan (2001, 2008), Robert Marzano and Timothy Waters (2009), Ken Leithwood (2008) and Alan Blankstein (2004) have been instrumental in helping inform and develop the district's key strategies for restructuring and change. The strategies implemented need to be sustainable and backed by solid research and evidence. The Grande Prairie Public School District's journey for systemic change and improvement is, however, far from over. A number of important lessons have been learned over the past 4 years that have supported the changes that needed to occur. A number of practical lessons will continue to sustain the district's growth, and to build a promising vision for the future.

First, the district has built and strengthened a culture of trust, collaboration, support and transparency throughout all levels of the organization. The degree to which any change is successful and/or sustainable is entirely dependent upon the relationships and degree of trust between all levels of the enterprise. In particular, networking, hard work, collaboration and support have been developing between:

- Teachers, school administration and central office administration,
- Individual schools within Grande Prairie Public School District (GPPSD),
- GPPSD, the College of Alberta School Superintendents and the Alberta Teachers Association, and
- GPPSD and the Alberta Department of Education.

These networks have resulted in a number of joint initiatives that have stimulated the organizational culture. Consequently, the learning environment in schools has improved significantly. Evidence and data collected clearly indicate marked change for the better.

Second, an emphasis has been put on alignment and integration of evidence for analysis, planning and decision-making. As the district began to engage the teachers,

school administrators and central office in establishing a framework for analysis, planning and decision-making, the following fundamental questions needed to be addressed:

- What evidence and sources of data would best inform our discussions?
- What confidence do we have in the information we were using as a valid, reliable and a strong indicator of improved student achievement and student engagement?
- What is the proper balance of qualitative and quantitative information?

There is a need for a close alignment and strong correlation among the data collected in the individual classroom, across grades in the school, in schools across the district, as well as in the district and the province. The high quality of the data and information was made possible by a high level of support and collaboration from:

- The district's teachers working in professional learning communities,
- The support from Alberta Education's System Improvement Group in undertaking Value Added School Reviews (Alberta Education 2008b),
- The College of Alberta School Superintendent's Moving and Improving Building Leadership Capacity: a Framework for School System Success research project, and
- The Alberta Teachers' Association's action research project Real Learning First which focused on developing an assessment and accountability framework for emotional intelligence.

With regard to the last bullet point above, much of student learning and achievement is focused on academic achievement, yet the district realises that it is becoming more and more important to develop new metrics for non-cognitive or psycho-social measures that play a part in students' attitudes towards school and to learning.

Third, the most important element in any endeavour directed at school or system improvement is having processes in place which promote dialogue about change and improvement in instructional practice. The district's found, in its efforts to generate sustainable change, to be data rich and analysis poor. The problem was not insufficient data but rather the need to change the focus towards creating the structures and culture which encouraged and supported a deeper professional dialogue. This dialogue was necessary in developing a shared understanding of how student engagement and learning could be promoted most effectively.

The district was able to revise school and district planning and reporting processes to ensure a close alignment among multi-level data analysis and improvement strategies. The support provided to classroom teachers and school administrators by the district's central office with the Alberta Department of Education's assistance in analysing data was critical to facilitating the identification of strategies for change and improvement. Throughout the discussions that occurred and questions that were raised everyone involved became learners and were able to develop new and better understandings as they delved deeper into the data.

District and school plans must communicate a vision and a plan that adds value, provides meaning and charts a direction that is achievable and sustainable. The district and school plans are transparent, living documents describing "messy", that is, complex challenges. They are accessible to all. The structures and processes were put in place to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between teachers, administrators and central office staff who celebrate successes and contributions, challenge assumptions, and provide insight and support to those seeking assistance. The resultant culture is characterised by a proud sense of ownership and an enhanced level of accountability.

Effecting system-wide change and improvement is a challenging and complex process. As the Grande Prairie Public School District works towards system-wide improvement there is a continuous search for new understandings, using the latest research on improving school and district performance. The district continues to call upon the resources and support of the external partners as it cannot accomplish its goals alone. Sustainable change and improvement requires patience and confidence that the work will make a difference. The collaboration, trust and support of all partners built on more comprehensive and balanced databases are the key to effecting the changes needed to improve the Grande Prairie Public School District.

Drawing on Accountability and Value-Added Data

Below, a few examples are discussed of how provincially-mandated, systematically collected accountability and value-added data can be used to inform and facilitate district and school-level decision-making.

Charting District Profile

One of the important features of comprehensive data systems is the opportunity to provide an integrated picture of a district's student population and associated environment. Charting a comprehensive district profile using solid evidence is essential for better understanding of local contexts in which students and educators interact.

For example, research literature consistently points to a link between socioeconomic status (SES) and student academic outcomes (e.g., Adams and Ryan 2000; Dahl and Lochner 2005; Magnuson 2003; Morris et al. 2006; van Zanten 2005). It is imperative, therefore, for the district's educational leaders to be fully aware of local SES milieu and to take account of their position relative to the state/province and/or other school districts' outcomes. Rather than using local SES-related issues to rationalise low student outcomes, it is important to account for them in designing custom interventions in order to counteract the potential negative effects of low SES.

SES Profile (Based on 2006 Census Data)
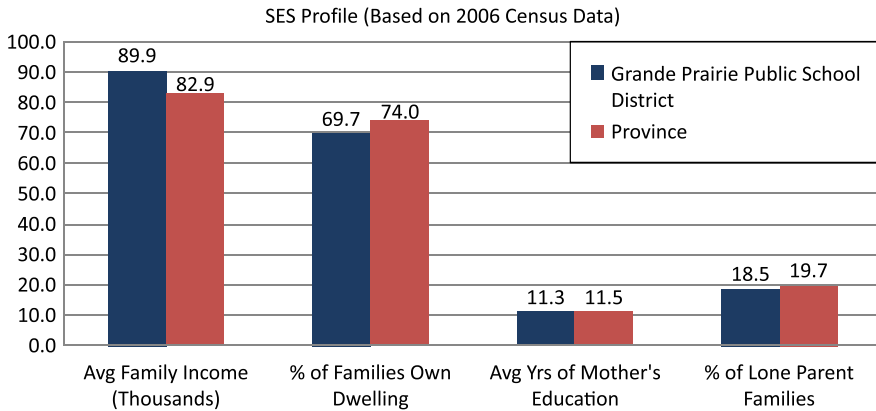
Fig. 16.2 Socio-economic status of Grande Prairie public student population compared to the provincial background

The SES variables depicted in Fig. 16.2 are aggregated for provincial and district-level reports based on students' residence in relationship to the school attended. Grande Prairie Public does not deviate much from the provincial data and may be characterised as a middle-class community. Relatively high average family income combined with a relatively lower percentage of families in owned dwelling may be associated with the recent "oil boom," and a corresponding high proportion of incoming population and large numbers of students entering the district system.

The average level of parent (mother's) education is positively linked to student achievement (e.g., Alberta Education 2010; Nadirova et al. 2009). This indicator is overall, just below the high school level and is at the average provincial level, based on a broader range. Relatively low parental levels of education may indicate the need for more supplementary programs in schools (e.g., tutoring) to assist students with keeping up with their grade curriculums and help potentially at risk (e.g., highly mobile) students to catch up.

Relatively low levels of parental education are offset by a relatively low percentage of lone parent families, an important factor associated with student achievement.

The dynamics of key variables such as English as a Second Language (ESL), special needs and student mobility, should also be regularly captured in the district profile so as to inform program design and staff attribution and allocation. As illustrated in Fig. 16.3, mobility levels for Grande Prairie students are generally lower than provincial averages, with almost half of the district's students clustered in the least mobile group, having moved schools only three times or less by grade 10. Mobility is an important predictor of student achievement and high school completion (Alberta Education 2010; Nadirova et al. 2009).

Figure 16.4 depicts Grande Prairie Public's teacher-generated classroom grade level of achievement (GLA) results plotted for high and low mobility students in grades 1–9. Students characterised by low mobility consistently outperformed their

Student Mobility (Percent of Students) -2007-08 School Year
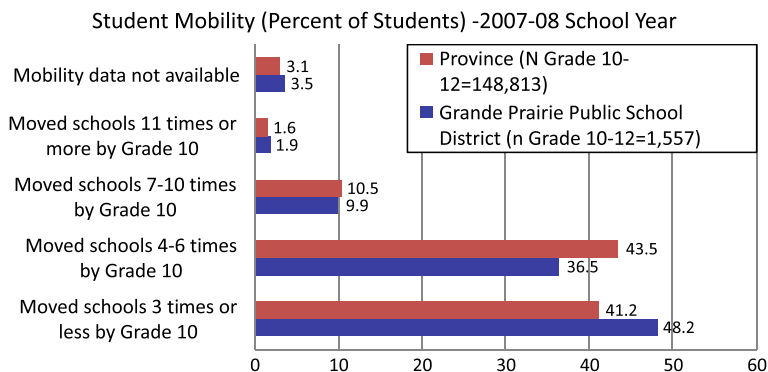
Fig. 16.3 Student mobility: number of changed school registrations by grade 10 for grade 10, 11 and 12 students
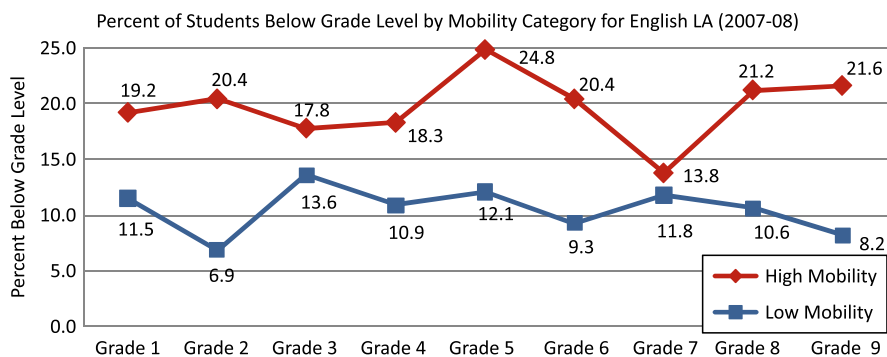
Fig. 16.4 Below enrolled grade level achievement in English Language Arts for high and low mobility students (Grande Prairie Public School District)

highly mobile counterparts who change schools more often.[2] Student mobility data linked to student academic outcomes may provide a powerful demonstration to teachers and parents of how harmful the effects of student mobility may be for students' success at school. Analysing this relationship on a regular and more disaggregated (classroom) basis may provide evidence as to the effectiveness of

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[2] Student school registrations are captured by Alberta Education, once at the end of September and again in March, and compiled in the Student Information System (SIS). The Student Mobility Indicator (SMI) reflects the number of times a student has changed schools since entry into the Alberta school system and up until the most recent calendar year. Students could be changing schools more frequently than is captured, thus SMI may be a conservative estimate of student mobility. All students start with an SMI of 1 as they have all been registered in at least one school. SMI is grouped in this report into two – high and low mobility categories. In Grades 1–3, students with SMI of 2 or more are considered high mobility. In Grades 4–6, high mobility students are those having a mobility indicator of 3 or more. In Grades 7–9, high mobility students are those with SMI of 4 or more.
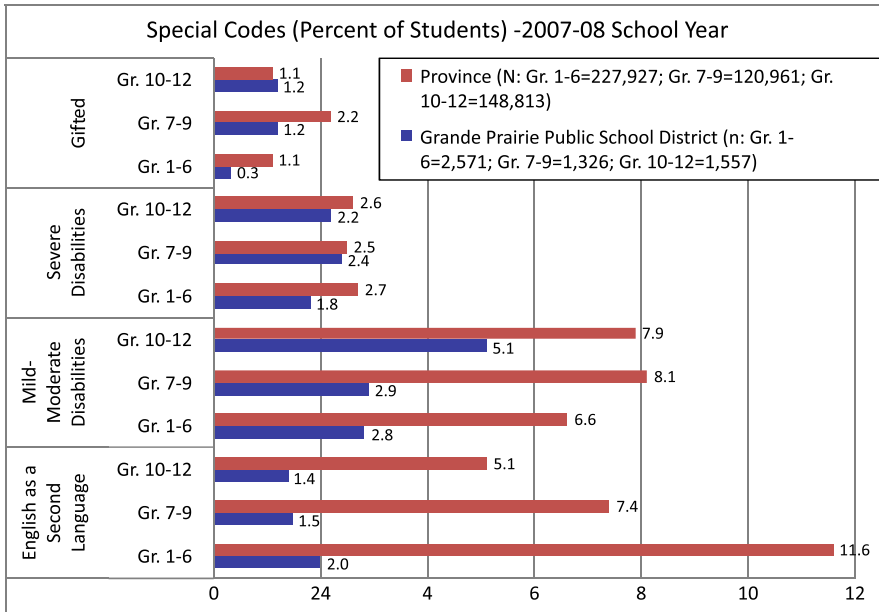
Fig. 16.5 Special student codes profiles for Grande Prairie Public School District and the province

programmes designed to help highly mobile students academically and to assist families in counteracting the negative effects of student mobility. Similarly, the external provincial achievement test [PAT] data for grades 3, 6 and 9 can be analysed to similar effect.

Student outcomes (achievement and high school completion data) may also be related to the SES data (e.g., for the district generally and for individual schools). The dynamics in these relationships can be used in evaluations of the effectiveness of various school and community-based programmes directed at offsetting negative effects of low SES.

Figure 16.5 illustrates the distribution of the Grande Prairie Public students with various special needs (codes) relative to the province in general. In all, the district has much lower proportions of coded students compared to the general provincial levels, especially with respect to ESL and mild/moderate disabilities.

Dynamics in Student Academic Outcomes: Trends and Issues

Figure 16.6 demonstrates how the annually collected GLA data can be applied to capture the dynamics of student achievement. Grande Prairie classroom-based student achievement for Grades 1 through 9 in general did not see a lot of changes during the three last school years. The percentage of students below enrolled grade
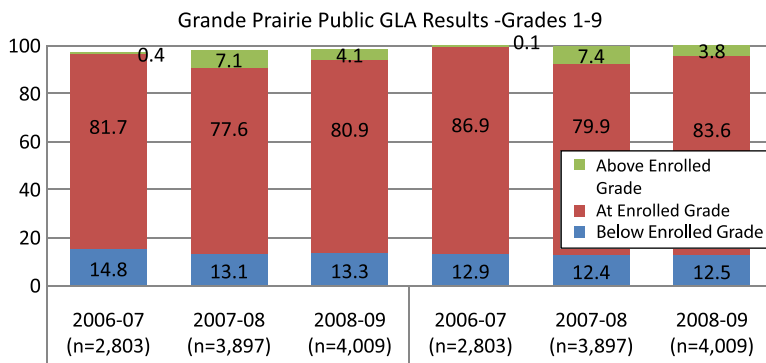
Fig. 16.6 Dynamics of grade level achievement results in Grande Prairie Public School District (Note: Some columns do not add up to 100% because GLA data were not available for a small number of students)

in English Language Arts dropped slightly. An "anomalously" high percentage of students above grade level in 2007–2008 may be attributed to a sizeable influx of new students. Disaggregating the data by grade may provide more variation and generate further questions.

In order to better understand and effectively address student achievement and high school completion issues, it is important for educators to be aware of the dynamics in high school course participation and associated precursors and outcomes.

Figure 16.7 juxtaposes Grande Prairie Public and general provincial information on completed courses in grades 10, 11 and 12 in the 2007–2008 school year. The data indicate that the percentage of students taking advanced English Language Arts courses was approximately 10% lower in Grande Prairie Public than in the province generally. Also, the proportion of students taking both advanced and general courses (shifting from general to advanced streams or vice versa) was very low both for the province and Grande Prairie Public. Not surprisingly, the share of this type of student transition tended to increase in Grade 12 as high school completion approached.

The next two examples are based on 2007–2008 grade 12 students. Table 16.1 shows a clear association between the past standardised provincial achievement test (PAT) results in grade 6 and 9 and participation in English Language Arts courses in grade 12.

For example, the vast majority of students who were in the "excellent" range in Grade 9 English Language Arts PATs also took an advanced course in Grade 12, whereas only slightly over half of students who were at the "acceptable" level in PATs took an advanced Grade 12 course. Furthermore, only about 6% of students who had "below acceptable" PAT grades took the advanced course (Please note that not all Grande Prairie Public grade 12 students are presented in this analysis. Only those who took grade 6 and/or 9 PAT in the province and completed English Language Arts courses in grade 12 were included). The same type of analysis was run using participation in Grade 10 and 11 advanced or general courses and yielded similar associations.
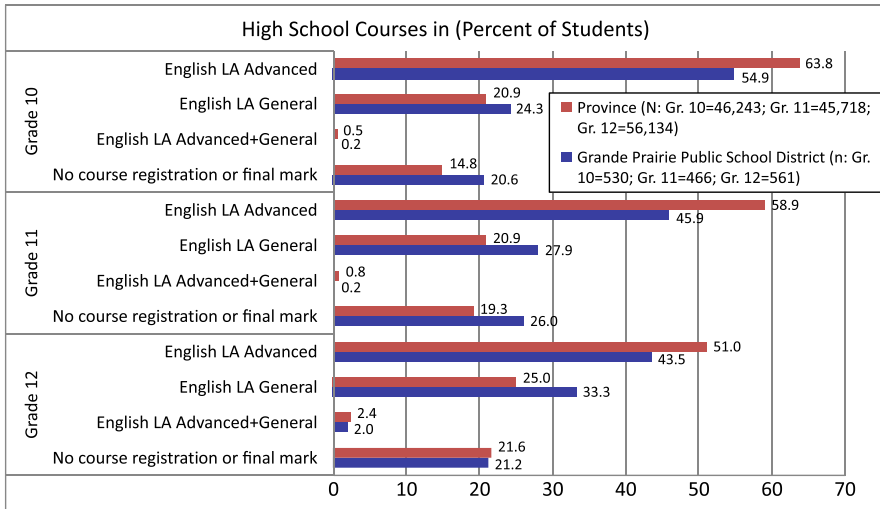
Fig. 16.7 High school English Language Arts course participation for Grande Prairie Public School District and the province (Note: Students in the "No course registration or final mark" category represent a diverse group including those who divert taking courses to the next grade, those who start taking a course but did not complete it and other. Information for other high school courses may be analysed in a similar way and also "sliced" by district schools. Additionally, it is useful to analyse the dynamics in high school course patterns across several years, in order to assess the effects of interventions and to identify patterns among various student populations)

Table 16.1 Grande Prairie public diploma course streams for students with various results on Provincial Achievement Test (PAT) in English Language Arts (2007–2008)

English Language Arts diploma courses (grade 12)	English LA PAT Excellent %	English LA PAT Acceptable %	English LA PAT Below acceptable %
Grade 6			
Advanced (ELA 30–1)	84.6	61.5	13.9
General (ELA 30–2)	15.4	35.3	83.3
Both advanced and general	0	3.2	2.8
Total – % (n)	100	100	100
	(39)	(252)	(36)
Grade 9			
Advanced (ELA 30–1)	94.7	58.2	5.6
General (ELA 30–2)	5.3	38.4	88.9
Both advanced and general	0	3.4	5.6
Total – % (n)	100	100	100
	(38)	(297)	(36)

Note: The analysis includes only students who took grade 6 and/or 9 PAT in the province and completed grade 12 high school English Language Arts courses

Table 16.2 Grande Prairie public high school academic stream transitions in English Language Arts (ELA) and high school completion (2007–2008)

High school completion status 10 years after entering grade 10[a]	Academic stream transitions (English Language Arts)			
	Advanced only in grades 10–12	General only in grades 10–12	Switched from advanced or Adv/ Gen to general in grade 11	Switched from advanced or Adv/ Gen to general in grade 12
	%	%	%	%
Credentialed/ non-credentialed completers	83.3	62.5	41.7	25.0
Continuers (non-completers)	10.7	37.5	58.3	75.0
Total – % (n)	100 (178)	100 (40)	100 (24)	100 (32)

Note: The vast majority of high school completers are credentialed completers and a very small fraction are non-credentialed completers

[a]*Credentialed Completers* – students who achieve credentialed completion status (Alberta High School Diploma, High School Equivalency Diploma [GED], and Certificate of Achievement for completion of the Integrated Occupational Program). *Non-credentialed Completers* – students who leave school without one of the above credentials but who have earned credits in high school courses that enable them to continue into post-secondary or apprenticeship programs within 3, 4 or 5 years of starting grade 10. *Continuers* – students, including those registered in upgrading programs, who do not complete high school within 3, 4 or 5 years but are still involved with the secondary system as evidenced by their having a course completion record

Table 16.2 illustrates high school completion outcomes 3 years after entering Grade 10 (i.e., by Grade 12) depending on high school students' academic streams in English Language Arts (ELA). Four student course stream transition categories were included in this report for illustrative purposes, including those who took only advanced or, alternatively, only general ELA courses in grades 10–12 and those who switched from the advanced to general stream starting in grade 11 or in grade 12. The excluded students were a very small number of those who switched from the general to advanced stream; students who switched streams more than once; students who did not have continuous course registration in grades 10–12 or who had left school. Therefore, there are only two high school completion categories – "completers" and "continuers." The latter did not complete high school 3 years after entering grade 10, but did not drop out and continued their registration into the fourth year.

There were many more high school completers among the students who consistently took advanced ELA courses all the way through grade 12 compared to students who took general-level courses. In addition, a different pattern emerged for students who switched from the advanced stream in grade 10 to the general one, depending on the grade of switch. Students who did the course switch earlier (in grade 11 and continued through grade 12) did better with high school completion (42% completed) than their counterparts who switched courses later, in grade 12 (25% completed). This pattern needs to be further explored (at a larger scale) and explained, but a preliminary interpretation could be the benefits of early career

planning (i.e., the possibility that early switches decided on career paths long before entering grade 12 and consistently worked in this direction).

The above examples provide only a brief illustration of how student academic and value-added data can be studied to provide insights into student outcomes and associated environments to inform decision-making by education leaders. These brief but diversified highlights demonstrate, however, that multi-faceted data can be analysed and presented in an uncomplicated manner and used easily by school teachers, principals and jurisdiction staff to scan education environments, ask questions and identify and prioritize issues and solutions.

Conclusions

The Wallace Foundation's (2006:8) report on more comprehensive and connected educational leadership approaches observes that,

> It is important to emphasize that this vision of a more comprehensive approach to leadership improvement is in an early and highly formative stage. Indeed, it is largely hypothetical, existing only in fragments in a few states and districts that have made early attempts to make the critical policy connections.

In this chapter we have provided some additional insights into ways in which leadership standards can be reified in relationship to building supportive networks as well as more meaningful and useful data to support evidence-based decision-making by education leaders. Intelligent leadership: Constructs for thinking education leaders (Burger et al. 2007) presents the view that effective educational leadership is premised on a complex, multi-faceted and inter-related set of skills and knowledge. Effective educational leadership is becoming a clearer and better understood enterprise. Necessary conditions include:

- Inter-connected and holistic policy frameworks across system boundaries to support education leaders
- A commitment to change, and change processes, recognising that status-quo leadership will not move an organisation to excellence
- On-going reflective thinking about how effective current leadership strategies achieve success for all students in a school or jurisdiction
- A keen understanding of pedagogy and learning theories applied to curricular outcomes
- Transparent and open education systems that use data and evidence to build partnerships with students, parents and communities in moving schools to higher performance
- Balanced approaches to student assessment that give weight to formative assessment strategies linked to effective teaching methods and use summative assessment to gauge progress and provide feedback to students, teachers and parents
- A willingness to re-assign existing resources to new uses that promise more effective outputs and outcomes for students, and

- Life-long, interactive and articulated leadership training models that help to shift the accountability foci from a blame and shame process to a capacity building, networked enterprise.

However, as the Wallace Foundation paper (2006: 4) observes,

> … 'successful leadership' remains poorly understood and defined and is not yet well-enough connected to the paramount goal of promoting learning. Instead, standards frequently focus on the knowledge and skills a leader needs, but much less on the behaviours that are likely to promote better teaching and learning in schools.

In recognition of these shortcomings, the opportunities and challenges in making data and evidence-informed decision-making a central component of leadership at all levels of the education system is of fundamental importance. This chapter has illustrated how educational leadership is being enhanced in Alberta by linking it to more comprehensive, current, accessible and balanced (internal and external) data with practical applications at the school and jurisdiction levels, supported by an enhanced data warehouse maintained by the Department of Education. Value-added data analysis by school and district leaders supported by emerging leadership standards and support networks are in the early stages of development. These efforts, however, promise a future in which leadership behaviours are better understood through the enhanced inter-connectivity of leaders' critical reflection, focused on success for all students.

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Chapter 17
Developing Leaders, Building Networks, Changing Schools Through System Leadership

Wilfried Schley and Michael Schratz

Policy Background

After the long history of the Austrian Hungarian Monarchy (Empress Maria Theresia introduced compulsory schooling as early as 1774), Austria has only had a short history of democratic policy-making in the so-called Second Republic after World War II. The country has developed into a federal state of provinces with distinct identities, and at the same time a very strong culture of centralized thinking. Depending on one's perspective, it could in this sense be called the most centralized federal state or the most federal centralized state.

This constellation of policy culture leads to a situation which makes it difficult to put central policies into practice without significant "interference" by the federal parts of the system. This situation was particularly exacerbated in 1962, when a parliamentary decision was made to handle school laws like constitutional laws, requiring a two-third majority for laws to pass. This measure prevents sudden changes by minority governments while also safeguarding the interests of the political parties and the provinces.

As a consequence, the present system is highly bureaucratic, strongly regulated in details, hierarchically organized and little output-oriented. There are too many actors, numerous parallel structures, and too little congruence in task orientation and assumptions of responsibility. The system is characterized by a strong influence of social partnership structures, partisan politics, the (teacher) union and the teacher representatives, whereas parents, students, research(ers), and other (less formally organized) actors have relatively little voice (cf. Schmid et al. 2007).

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This policy context makes it very difficult to introduce coherent approaches to developing the school system. The implications for school governance and leadership reform initiatives are that eclectic government interventions cause an overload problem by piling disconnected policies one upon one another, leading to a sense of confusion and uncertainty, not only among the actors in schools, but also at different levels within the school system (regional, district, local levels). This in turn leads to de-energizing effects of fragmentation, creates leadership dilemmas, and pulls school managers in different directions between *sollen* (duty) and *wollen* (desire) (cf. Schratz 2003, 409–410).

Although there has been a shift toward more school-based innovation through a slow movement toward more decentralization and deregulation (cf. Schratz and Hartmann 2009), local school governance and leadership are characterized by a flat hierarchical structure with one head and varying numbers of teachers. Due to a strong focus on one person, leadership is not shared by many people. Moreover, school heads are confronted with restricted autonomy (finance, curriculum, personnel), making it difficult for them to empower their faculty for collective action.

After several policy interventions for school reform (cf. Zukunftskommission 2003; ExpertInnenkommission 2008) we seem to be experiencing what the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann asked, from the perspective of systems theory, namely "whether the education system is able to generate new reflective ideas out of its own resources or whether it must depend on the irritations and structural couplings within its social environment – not least in order to be able to experience itself as difference" (Luhmann 2002, 196; translation ours). In Austria, such an irritation was caused by international comparative studies in general and PISA in particular, which have more or less shown that the present education system does not achieve what it is supposed to. For Salcher (2008, 195) the PISA debate has got the right ball, but it is rolling in the wrong direction:

> The official reactions to the poor PISA test results 2003 in Austria and Germany was reminiscent of a highly talented student who succeeded in muddling through for years but whose poor achievement was suddenly exposed after an important exam. They reached from blaming and shaming, wild outrage, deep contrition to the promise to start to study harder and do better the next time. The responsible politicians took on the role of enraged parents who angrily approached the examination board to file complaints ranging from the completely unsuitable exam tasks their child had to solve to mistakes made in the corrections.

If we look at school reform internationally, we find little evidence that the direction of change is well balanced. Again and again researchers warn about findings which show that conventional school reform does not reach the classroom door (e.g., Schrag 1988; Levin 2008; Marzano 2004; Payne 2008). The main reason for the missing sustainability of reform initiatives seems to lie in the dysfunction of a political culture which develops reform models and tries to implement them by means of prescriptive strategies rather than by capacity building. Their failure is often attributed to the fact that they follow a traditional managerial or leadership model which builds on command and control (cf. Harris (2010).

Theory Background

The Grammar of the Social Field

To come up with new approaches to system-wide change, the authors were commissioned by the Austrian Ministry of Education to work on new reform initiatives to counteract the flaws of traditional implementation strategies in school reform. We adopted Scharmer's model of "Presencing" (Scharmer 2007) as a field theory while developing our approach. His "Grammar of the Field" (Fig. 17.1) builds on four critical fields referring to thinking (micro), languaging (meso), institutionalizing (macro), and global governing (mundo), which can reach four layers of depth of experience with "Presencing" at the bottom of a U-shaped process (Theory U), which for him is where the future emerges.

> Moving from Field 1 to Field 2 requires *opening up* to the data of the exterior world and *suspending* ingrained and habitual (and often dysfunctional) patterns of action and thought (open mind). Moving from Field 2 to Field 3 entails taking *a deep dive* into relevant contexts and *redirecting* one's attention such that perception begins to "happen from the field" (open heart). Moving from Field 3 to Field 4 requires *letting go* of old identities and intentions and *letting come* new identities and intentions that are more directly connected with one's deepest sources of individual and collective action and energy (open will). (Scharmer 2007, 241–242)

Field-Structure Of Attention	Microsphere Individual Attention	Mesosphere Conversion Languaging	Macrosphere Institutional Structure	Mundosphere Governance Mechanism
I-in-me	Downloading	Downloading	Centralized	Hierarchy
I-in-it	Seeing	Debate	Decentralized	Market
I-in-you	Sensing	Dialogue	Networked	Dialogue
I-in-now	Presencing	Presencing	Innovation Ecosystem	Collective Presence

OPENING and SUSPENSION

DEEP DIVE and REDIRECTION

LETTING GO and LETTING COME

Fig. 17.1 Layers of the social field (Scharmer 2007, 241)

For Scharmer, the greater a system's hyper-complexity, the more critical is the capacity to operate from the deeper fields of social emergence. Educational systems and institutions "face three types of complexities: *dynamic complexity* (defined by cause and effect being distant in space and time), *social complexity* (defined by conflicting interests, cultures, and world-views among diverse stakeholders), and *emerging complexity* (defined by disruptive patterns of innovation and change in situations in which the future cannot be predicted and is addressed by the patterns of the past" (Scharmer 2007, 242–243). Taking these complexities into consideration, we were looking for a system approach which would allow different stakeholders to see and act from the emerging whole and link it with leadership as a leveraging factor, something that has been missing in the Austrian school culture, namely "the capacity to collectively sense, shape, and create our future" (Scharmer 2007, 352).

Growth as an Antagonism and Synthesis of Regression and Progression

Schmitz (1990) founded the "New Phenomenology" as a complex and differentiated philosophical concept, describing the dynamics and principles of personal, inter-personal, and cultural development of people in their different situations and environments. His studies focus on a nonreductionist approach to research and analyze the personal situation as an ongoing process of past and future, regression and progression, narrowing and widening perspectives. This is expressed in a figure of a sinus-curve of irritation, confrontation, and apparent chaos, moving toward emancipation in which the whole is seen as embodying the actual situation and its connection with an emerging future. In this respect, Schmitz' phenomenological approach with its emphasis on the felt-body and embodiment is closely connected with Scharmer's Theory U and his concept of Presencing.

In understanding the complexity and dynamics of learning and growth, the crucial role of subjects has to be regarded as a prerequisite for the concept of personalized learning. Professional understanding of personalization means being aware of the complexity and chaotic variety of issues, elements, aspects, dimensions, factors, as well as of problems, programs, and intentions which comprise the whole situation. Be it a diagnostic process of assessment, an inclusion process within a classroom, school, and community, or a mutual understanding of challenges, achievement, and qualities, seeing a situation from the whole means being confronted with this chaotic variety.

The principle of "observe, observe, observe" (Scharmer), leads to an open mind, in which the dynamic can be seen as connected to the phenomenon of regression. The more one observes, the more one feels overwhelmed by impressions, thoughts, and feelings. A solution-oriented process uses the dynamic of regression as a deep dive and the process of rising, seeing the situation from the whole by integrating aspects into a bigger picture. The deeper one gets, the higher the capacity for dealing with

complexity and uncertainty. The process forces the individual to take ownership and initiative by co-creating the situation. It shifts networks from a chaotic mass of ideas, concepts, and experiences to a new level of order, integrating learning on different levels in different institutions and regions and results in a shift to a mutual understanding and professionalization of leadership for learning.

Overview

From 2004 through 2010 we were commissioned to develop and conduct two nation-wide reform initiatives working in two strategically important areas with a view to reconciling theoretical dichotomies of social systems such as *agency* and *structure* (Giddens 1984) or *micro* and *macro* perspectives, which may be represented as a spiral development leading to improvements in student learning (see Fig. 17.2).

   The first system-wide initiative is the *Leadership Academy*, a learning context with the aim of influencing the pattern of how professionals in leading positions think and go about change. It builds on conceptual change as a driving force for leadership development. The second initiative, the reform project *New Middle School* (NMS)*, requires a fundamental reorientation of the instructional and organizational system of teaching and learning for 10- to 14-year-olds by dissolving the structure of tracking in lower secondary schooling and creating homogenous groups. A third spiral loop, *Hierarchy meets Network*, concerned with sustainable leadership for learning by opening up the hierarchical discourse between the ministry and the classroom, is in its early stages of development.
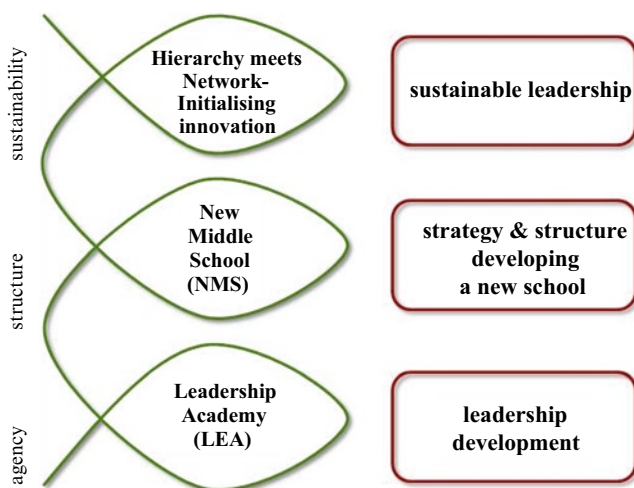
Fig. 17.2 Spiral development for sustainable leadership

The First Loop: Leadership Development

Making Educational Leaders Agents for Reform

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Austria has had a compulsory school management training program for the first years of appointment as a prerequisite for a permanent position as a school head (see Fischer and Schratz 1993, 204–208; Schratz and Petzold 2007, 26). This is an on-the-job training program helping new school heads to change their role from that of a former teacher to leading a school, introducing them to the basics of their new role. Because they are organized for the school heads of a certain region (usually on a provincial level) and directed to individual new school heads leading their (new) school, these training programs cannot contribute to system-wide development in a coherent manner.

Nationally, school leaders are an important link in the synchronization of top-down and bottom-up processes (cf. Fullan 2005) and are the key actors in promoting quality processes in schools (Hall and Hord 1987; Firestone and Riehl 2005). Pont et al. (2008, 19) also refer to the decisive role of school leadership in school reform: "It bridges educational policy and practice." If central reform initiatives are to be coherently integrated into the life of schools and classrooms (cf. Stoll et al. 2002), a new approach to capacity building for professional school leadership had to be developed as a prerequisite to system-wide change.

As a consequence, in 2004 the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture sought an innovative concept for the professionalizing of its 6,000 school leaders and other executives in leadership positions in the Austrian school system. In order to learn from previous reform initiatives in Austria and the research findings on innovation and change, the need for a new approach was framed around the following questions:

- How can the complex decision-making structure be disentangled and the different demands of central and federal interests be brought into balance?
- How is it possible to coordinate communication and actions both of policy and practice among the different levels of the system?
- How can a learning context which aims at influencing the pattern of how professionals go about changing their organizations be created?
- How can the system be energized by more individual and organizational empowerment?
- How can leadership be more closely connected with learning by creating better conditions for student achievement?
- How can professional development create system-wide culture change and be linked with the improvement capacity of the actors on the different horizontal and vertical levels?

We address these questions by presenting the philosophy of the Leadership Academy in ten principles, each of which highlights the innovative character of its design.

The Ten Principles of the Leadership Academy (LEA)

Principle 1: Work with the Whole System in Large Group Arrangements

Recently, several methods have been introduced for engaging whole systems in development processes, such as a Future Search Conference, Real Time Strategic Chance (RTSC), Open Space Technology, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and World Café. They all aim at including as many people as possible in systems development, engaging them fully in the change process (Holman et al. 2008). Taking the recent developments into consideration, the *LEA* is organized in cohorts of up to 300 participants from across the whole education system, so making use of the manifold expertise of educational leaders and identifying with the overall goal of systemic innovation.

Each *cohort* is composed of 250–300 participants from all provinces and school types as well as the ministry, regional education authorities (including the inspectorate), and teacher education institutions. This ensures right from the outset that a systemic impact on change and transformation is possible and that the "whole system" is involved in a joint learning process. The role of the *LEA* is in congruence with the principles of a learning organization and cooperates closely with responsible decision makers in the ministry. Moreover, the joint efforts of the large number of representatives from different sectors of the education system generate the productive energy necessary for an inspiring and inclusive vision as a basis for profound change (Bruch and Vogel 2005). As a part-time program the *LEA* consists of four forums which take place over 1 year, in which all participants within a cohort meet for 3 days each.

The kick-off takes place in the *First Forum*, which is designed to orient participants on the philosophy, organization, structure, and underlying processes of the *LEA*. They are introduced to setting their own goals and choosing their personal professional projects which lie at the heart of their individual development. The creation of trust in the network takes center stage, as well as the forming of *learning partnerships* and *collegial team coaching groups* (*CTC*s) and the elaboration of possible innovation themes.

Between *forums* the *learning partners* and the *CTC*s meet regionally or locally. They reflect on the reactions of their stakeholder groups in their schools, education authorities and inspectoral systems, or teacher education institutions with reference to their individual development projects. These processes develop through cycles of anticipation, action, and reflection. The principle of ownership and responsibility is combined with a goal and result, which demands respect, openness, and flexibility from everybody involved.

In the *Second Forum,* the individual development projects of participants are defined, developed, and outlined, using project management methods and tools. In this phase, the CTCs are responsible for collaborative reflection on individual development processes with a view challenging established patterns of thinking and time worn "solutions." In the *Third Forum*, participants reflect on their mutual

experiences during the implementation of their development projects. This is the creative space where skepticism, resistance, conflicts, and tensions come to the fore just as much as agreement, motivation, and enthusiasm. Different workshops on communication, motivation, conflict resolution, and decision making are offered as a support for individual learning and capacity building. Art workshops, dance, or survival camp techniques support the holistic learning approach.

In the *Certification Forum*, participants present their professional learning processes and their results – first in the privacy of their CTCs before deciding collaboratively on one project of their CTC to be presented to the others in a final phase of parallel sessions. For successful certification, each participant of the *Leadership Academy* has to submit a portfolio on their individual, personal, and professional development process for review.

Principle 2: Involve All Types of Schools and All Levels of the System to Connect Horizontal and Vertical System Levels

School systems are usually organized along the hierarchical structure of the political system with the ministry on top and the schools at the bottom. As school reform does not work along "detailed deliverology" (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, 110) the *LEA* invites educational leaders from all levels of the hierarchy (schools, local administration, inspectorate, ministry, teacher education institutions) and takes them into a stimulating setting outside the (hierarchical) system: The *LEA* has its venue at the campus of the Alpbach Conference Centre, which also hosts the *European Forum Alpbach*, which, similar to the *World Economic Forum* in Davos, brings together politicians and decision makers from all areas to discuss and brainstorm new ideas and solutions to the world problems (see Fig. 17.3).

For Hargreaves and Shirley, the hardest part of educational change is not to start it, but how to make it last and spread, which calls for coherence in the nature of activities which bridge policy and practice. "The challenge of coherence is not to clone or align everything so it looks the same in all schools… The challenge, rather, is how to bring diverse people together to work skillfully and effectively for a common cause that lifts them up and has them moving in the same direction with an impact on learning, achievement, and results" (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, 94–95). They suggest the following four catalysts that create this coherence: sustainable leadership, integrating networks, responsibility before accountability, and differentiation and diversity. Bringing together key actors from all levels in the system is an attempt to pay attention to these four catalysts with a view to greater coherence in systems development. Through the dynamic work arrangements in various settings (large groups, small groups, coaching groups, critical friendship, regional networks), new energy for change processes is created, which can then be taken back into their traditional work places, helping to contribute to overall coherence.
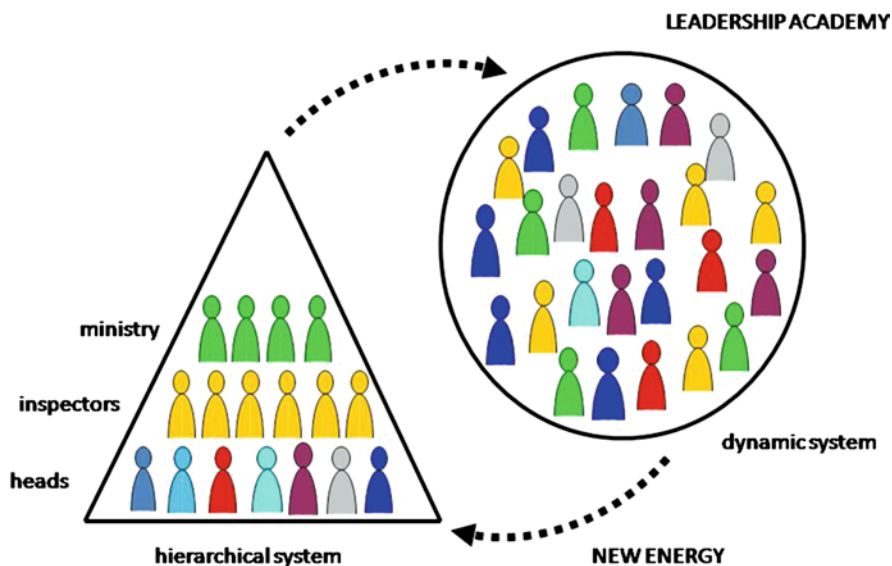
Fig. 17.3 Connect horizontal and vertical system levels

Principle 3: Build Networks Rather Than a New Construction Site

The *LEA* is a network organization and is not built as a physical environment. As Fullan argues, "We need a radically new mind-set for reconciling the seemingly intractable dilemmas fundamental for sustainable reform: top-down versus bottom-up, local and central accountability, informed prescription and informed professional judgment, improvement that keeps being replenished" (2005, 11). Bringing together leaders from all parts of the system helps in engaging everyone in a mutual development process, leading to new ways of thinking and acting. The *LEA* invests in capacity building as a way of strengthening systemic leadership by shifting reform policy away from a mere top-down process toward a network-based development. Network co-ordinators in all Austrian provinces function as the regional support system to ensure regional networking.

The networking character of the *LEA* aims at creating a new mentality of leadership which relies on trust and authenticity rather than on power through position. Its ultimate goal lies in sustainably, improving the preconditions and processes of young people's learning in all educational institutions. Networking serves the capacity building, qualification and empowerment of leaders in the Austrian educational system. Leaders are motivated to strategically target complex development tasks through priority setting, focusing on solutions, individual development projects, and creating organization profiles. The participants learn to translate challenges into innovative development processes and entice and empower staff in their work environment to achieve top performances.

The *LEA* network creates an intellectual as well as practical focus within a new paradigm of both personal and institutional improvement in leadership capacities at all levels of the school system. Networking requires a new understanding of theory and practice, one which transforms the educational system by taking the quality of leadership as the starting point for systemic innovation. It creates a learning context which aims to influence the patterns and habits of professionals in leading positions, enhancing their capacity to develop and transform their organizations.

Principle 4: Link Agency with Structure

In several countries, the ascendancy of school leadership is linked to the government's goals of raising educational standards and modernizing the education system and therefore "the primacy of leadership is part of a wider agenda of transformation across public services where leaders are the vehicle by which policy reforms can be implemented and change realized" (Forrester and Gunter 2009, 67). We regard this kind of "functional organizational leadership" as a managerial approach of neoliberal policy making rather than leadership, which is associated with being visionary, motivational, inspirational, and innovative. Due to the discrepancies between reality and the ideal, conceptions of leadership in recent years have been increasingly characterized by notions of personal leadership. As a result, there is a delineation of characteristics which apply to individual leaders and strategies for influencing the behavior of their associates. "A concept of leadership represents a (normative) system of recommendations for action on the manager's part, both in reference to personal responsibility and their personal leadership tasks. Leadership concepts are based explicitly or implicitly upon one or more leadership theories" (Stähle 1999, 839).

For our work in the *LEA* we have found Hinterhuber's theoretical model (2003) helpful, in that it attributes differentiating attitudes, mind-sets, and actions to *Management* and *Leadership*, modeling them along the Eastern conception of Yin-Yang (see Fig. 17.4).

According to the Yin-Yang metaphor, there is no clear-cut division between management and leadership, and yet their features are distinct. There is no "either – or" but an "as well as." Management carries elements of leadership and vice versa. Management is more a state of behavior referring to norms; leadership is more a (moral) attitude of influence. Behaving (managing) without a moral attitude is just as problematic as leading without acting according to (given) norms. Competency in management is easier to acquire than the capability of leadership, not the least because leadership is never a solo act. Rather it is a social activity, which should enable others to rise to their individual challenges and meet them with the necessary measures. It is school leaders who are in contact with many different stakeholders (not just within the school but in society at large: the community, politicians, the public, etc.) and they are also the ones to register their differing (and at times conflicting) interests. Leadership can only be effective in so far as leaders are willing to take on, and work to, their own moral (and policy) agendas, but these need to be grounded within the political framework in which their education systems operate,

Fig. 17.4 Interrelation between management and leadership (Hinterhuber 2003)

since the weight of normative pressures bears differently upon varying educational contexts (cf. Portin et al. 2005).

Culturally embedded trends "are based not on the laws of physics but on human habits, albeit habits on a large scale. These habitual ways of thinking and acting become embedded over time in the social structures we enact, but alternative social structures can also be created" (Scharmer 2007, xiii). In his structuration theory, Anthony Giddens (1984) "talks of the duality of structure in which social structures are not fixed sets of rules and resources but are features of social systems that have to be recreated in the specific moment of action. Such recreation can only take place when human agents act in this way or that and a powerful influence at that point is the reflexivity and knowledgeability" (Frost 2006, 4). Therefore, the implication of Giddens' theory of action is that social (or organizational) structures can be modified by the agency of individuals. Through its energy-driven approach and large group intervention the *LEA* promotes agency as a driving force in leadership for learning.

Principle 5: Create a Mind-Set for Innovation

In many ways, knowledge and excellence based on past experiences have lost their validity as a portent for future success. What we learned about management and

Fig. 17.5 Pattern change
through creative intervention
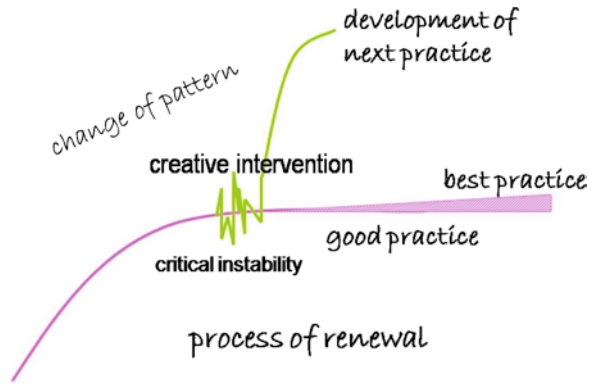
processes and what has worked for us up until now does not necessarily provide the answers to the diverse problems of today and even less so tomorrow. Very often education systems have reacted to pressure in an attempt to improve achievement within the existing framework of functionality. This "more of the same," however, often leads to little improvement, since a typical learning curve reaches the upper limit of further outreach. Old patterns bump up against the limitations of the potential solutions. Sometimes, special arrangements are made (e.g., through incentives) to attain best practice status, which, however, are difficult to implement because of their special status (e.g., model schools). Hentig (1993) therefore argues that it is not enough to renew or improve schools; he calls for rethinking school, demanding a new mind-set as to how we envisage school. In research, theoretical and methodological discussions have taken place in the process of reframing the "classical approach" to changing patterns of schooling at large, and teaching and learning in particular (e.g., see Vosniadou 2008). We see this reframing process as a shift of pattern from *best* practice to *next* practice (see Fig. 17.5).

For new patterns to emerge, critical incidents or interventions are necessary to enable an opening up of perspectives for *next practice* (Kruse 2004). However, leaving the trodden path initially causes insecurity and instability: The old patterns of mind do not function any more, and new ones have not yet gained stability. The experience is similar to an incubation phase for the emergence of the new, which conjoins with the old or even questions it. Creating a mind-set of sustainable change is a key concept which runs through all the phases of the *LEA*.

Principle 6: Learn from the Future as It Emerges (Theory U)

Creating a mind-set of change cannot be imposed or enacted; it is rather about a human being's innate capacity to create new knowledge. Otherwise, as Scharmer (2007, 119) argues, we are "downloading" patterns of the past, so preventing us from creating a new future. In his "Theory U. Leading from the Future as It Emerges" he develops a systemic theory of leadership which centers on "Presencing," a term which

he co-constructs from "Presence" and "Sensing." For him the essence of leadership builds on the capacity to feel in the here and now those future possibilities which are most salient rather than "downloading the patterns of the past."

To activate this vital potential as a leader, three preconditions are necessary: an *open mind*, an *open heart*, and an *open will*. Opening the mind is based on our intellectual capacity, which allows us to see things "with fresh eyes," which asks for new perspectives on leadership practice. Opening the heart, relates to our ability to access our emotional intelligence, which asks for empathy to feel the sensibility of the field. Opening the will "relates to our ability to access our authentic purpose and self,… It deals with the fundamental happening of the letting go and letting come" (41). "Presencing" is the moment when we connect to the source.

Scharmer describes these three stages of openness as new intelligences which every leader has to nurture and cultivate like precise instruments, helping to create the best possible future. Leadership, he argues, "in its essence is the capacity to shift the inner place from which we operate" and "leaders who understand how can build the capacity of their systems to operate differently and release themselves from the exterior determination" (373). This leads eventually, says Scharmer, to a "shift from sensing exterior causation to sensing something collective that is emerging from within" (Scharmer 2007).

Using *Theory U* as a "social technology" in the *LEA* helps in challenging participants' traditional views on leadership. It takes them onto a very intimate journey of personal and professional learning about one's understanding of the world and organizations and it highlights forms of learning on both the individual as well as the systems level as an interwoven and essential dialogue. Applying *Theory U* in their everyday practice enables the participants to pursue a path to an "ecosystem of innovation" in which profound change through "co-creating and co-evolving" social realities becomes possible. This should open a wide field for both individual and collective learning and understanding and help to close the "split between matter and mind" and thus "gain access to a deeper participation in the process of social reality creation" (374).

Principle 7: Create System Thinkers in Action

Linking policy with practice through networking asks for new types of roles in the education system. Fullan sees their role as *system thinkers in action*. These are "leaders at all levels of the system who proactively and naturally take into account and interact with larger parts of the system as they bring about deeper reform and help produce other leaders working on the same issues. They are theoreticians, but they are practitioners whose theories are lived in action every day. Their ideas are woven into daily interactions that make a difference" (2005, 11).

Bringing representatives from all sections of the system together is a prerequisite for creating system thinkers in action. In the *LEA* we use the social technology of *collaborative team coaching* (CTC, Schley and Schley 2010) to practice system thinking in action. Each CTC team consists of heterogeneous groups of six participants

who work within a strict structure. This fosters a solution-oriented approach rather than a problem-oriented one. In each collaborative team coaching session, one participant as "actor" is guided from the "problem space" in which they are caught moving toward a "solution space." Goal orientation, creativity, and inventiveness are the foundation and factors of the philosophy of the *CTC*.

The collaboration in the *CTC* enables a precise diagnosis of key issues, including issues for the development, leadership, and management of an organization, offering concrete possibilities for solutions and their implementation. It helps to utilize a team's intellectual, creative, and emotional potential; fosters entrepreneurial and goal-oriented thinking and acting; and encourages the forging of new paths and development of new strategies. Finally, the CTC reflects the process itself and analyzes the patterns and levels of energy during the CTC interaction. It enables reading between the lines. Often the energy explodes after a period of seeking and searching for the key issues and the breakthrough in "seeing the seeing" and "seeing from the whole" (Scharmer 2007). It strengthens the reliability of results.

CTC is used for each participant in every *Forum* and back home between the *Forums* as a continuous learning and development process *of* colleagues *by* colleagues. It is practiced so that it becomes an integral part of an organization's culture and a significant strategy for building a learning organization. It respects, and reflects, the complexity of the work, especially its leadership and management.

Principle 8: Reflect and Connect Through Critical Friendship

The smallest entity of the *LEA* is based on a *learning partnership*. This *learning partnership* is the home base for two participants, each of which aligns in a trusting reciprocal coaching partnership. They support each other through explorative questions, help to define project milestones, and guide each other through their individual learning processes. Each CTC consists of three *learning partnerships* forming learning groups of six, who consult and coach each other collaboratively. In their individual learning partnerships, the individual pairs act as so-called critical friends.

According to Costa and Killick (1993) a critical friend is "[a] trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens and offers a critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work" (22).

The advocacy for success is an important asset for the work of a critical friend. He or she deals with the outcome of the respective coaching phases in which his or her partner has been involved and helps in strategic planning for the "homecoming" after the forum. On the one hand, he or she monitors his or her partner's progress in personal and professional development, by bringing in an outside perspective, on the other hand, the learning partners support each other in putting their new leadership insights into practice. This can take place through mutual visits to one

another's workplaces including phases of shadowing or simply through meetings exchanging experiences and critically reflecting on them.

Principle 9: Connect Leadership with Learning

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other" is a quotation John F. Kennedy prepared for delivery in Dallas the day of his assassination. "Leadership" and "learning" have meanwhile been quoted as an indispensable pair in the context of schooling. However, there is a long way between a president's vision and the transfer of school leadership into classroom learning. In recent times, great effort has been dedicated to bringing leadership into closer contact with student learning (MacBeath and Moos 2004; Frost and Swaffield 2004). Internationally, *Leadership for Learning* has become the concept which focuses on the effective relationship between leadership and the learning processes of students in the classroom (MacBeath and Cheng 2008).

If we compare school as an organization with an organism (Pechtl 2001), "the heartbeat of leadership is a relationship, not a person or process" (Sergiovanni 2005, 53). And if we regard the learning school as a living organism, this "heartbeat" calls for enough resonance within the school to make the relationship between people at different levels; planning, culture, and structure in the system become visible. To put this concept into practice in the *LEA*, Schley and Schratz (2004) have developed a diagram illustrating a chain of effects in their leadership work. It serves as a mental web of meaningful relationships that point the way from leading to learning and back again. This chain of effects (see Fig. 17.6) illustrates how
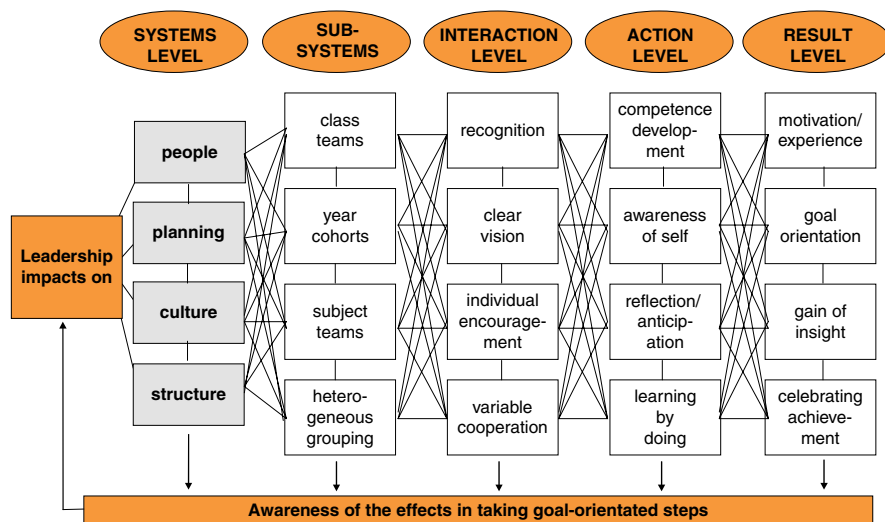
Fig. 17.6 Chain of effects from leadership to learning and back (Schley and Schratz 2004)

leadership impacts on people, planning, culture, and structure and how, through interaction, it produces action and results related to the school's goals.

Principle 10: Use Energy as the Currency of High Leadership Competence

Changing the culture of an organization is not easy to achieve. We use energy as a lever for promoting change, because it is easier to influence the energy of a system than to change the culture. In "The Power of Full Engagement" Loehr and Schwartz (2003) argue that "positive energy rituals … are key to full engagement and sustained high performance" (p. 16) and not the amount of time invested. Using positive energy during large group arrangements is an important feature of the *LEA*. It creates a positive collaborative culture for full engagement. Organizational energy is the power which helps organizations to move in a certain direction. The intensity of organizational energy is an indicator of how much emotional, mental, and behavioral potential can be mobilized to reach its goals. It is an indication of the vitality, intensity, and velocity of innovation processes. Bruch and Vogel (2005) offer an energy matrix which helps in assessing organizational energy according to the intensity and quality of innovation processes.

The matrix in Fig. 17.7 depicts four quadrants of organizational energy in a field of tension between low/high intensity and negative/positive quality characteristics. In our work, we experience schools with low energy with negative quality level, often leading to resigned indolence. If there is a positive quality level, they rest within their comfort zone and do not see much need for change.

There are also schools with a high energy level but negative quality characteristics, which acts as a corrosive force. There is a lot of energetic activity, but it is not used productively toward the future. Leadership for learning aims at reaching the top right quadrant with high energy and positive quality characteristics. This comprises the creative and productive impetus necessary for development processes. In other words, it involves a transformation from "mourning schools" into "breathing schools."

Six generations of graduates of the LEA (1,500 out of 6,000 school leaders) have become "system thinkers in action" (Fullan) and have begun collectively to sense,
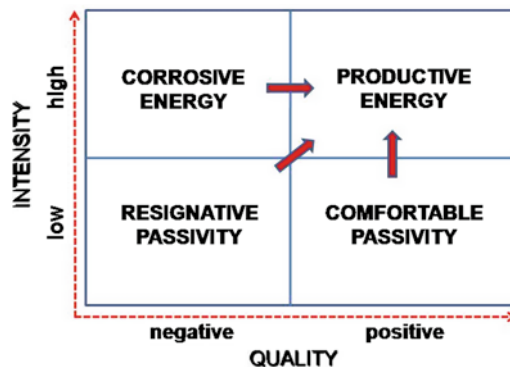
Fig. 17.7 Energy matrix (Bruch and Vogel 2005)

shape, and create a new future (Scharmer) for Austrian schools, which is already a critical mass using leadership as a leveraging factor for systems development. To get there, the concept of "agency" formed the bridge between policy and practice, between leadership and learning. However, we often heard the criticism that working at the "software" of the system (*agency*) would not change the "hardware" of the system (*structure*). That is why we based our work on Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, by which he attempts to move beyond the dualism of structure and agency and argues for the "duality of structure": social structure is both the medium and the outcome of social action. This is where Loop 2 in our spiral approach (Fig. 17.2) comes in.

The Second Loop: Development of a New School

The second, more recent nation-wide reform initiative in Austria is the development of the NMS, with the aim of fundamentally reorienting the instructional and organizational system of teaching and learning for 10- to 14-year-olds. Avoiding the early tracking of children at the age of 9–10 years is one of the core elements in this development work, which builds on a framework in fostering as well as challenging all children, irrespective of their social, cultural, and language background or their individual performance at the end of grade 4 in primary school. Shifting the decision on the future educational careers of juveniles to the end of lower secondary level should make for better integration of children and young people whether migration background and special education needs.

Such a whole system intervention cannot be dealt with in its complexity. We concentrate on three system activities: the paradigm shift, autonomy and responsibility, and the role of the development facilitation.

System Activity 1: Inventing a New School

The acceptance of the bid in a public tender for the national facilitation of the NMS development has given us[1] the chance to link the work of the *Leadership Academy* involving the different leadership levels in the system with the work of innovative schools in the NMS reform initiative. Regarding our triple spiral model (Fig. 17.2) we were offered a chance to look at agency from a structure perspective in Giddens' duality model. Dissolving the structure of tracking in lower secondary education requires a fundamental reorientation of the instructional and organizational system of teaching and learning for 10- to 14-year-olds in heterogeneous groups, which most actors in the educational arena were not prepared for. Class work with variously gifted pupils from a wide ability range combined with the need to focus on developing key

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[1]Further members of the NMS development facilitation team are Christoph Hofbauer and Tanja Westfall-Greiter.

schooling	learning	a fundamental change in understanding the teachers' role
streaming	personalized learning	a structural shift in dealing with diversity
assessment	feedback	different ways of focusing on student achievement
followership	agency	new assumptions about motivation
'My classroom and I'	'Our school and we'	understanding the school as a social system
concept implementation	systems development	a switch in orchestrating the change process
vertical command and control	lateral integration	a new perspective of the sources for innovation

Fig. 17.8 Shifting the system on a higher level

competences such as self-reliance, responsibility, creativity, flexibility, as well as communication, conflict management, and team skills calls for a new learning culture.

Inventing the NMS asked for a shift of the system to a higher order (Fig. 17.8).

Such a paradigm shift creates awareness of the hyper-complexity, which Scharmer (2007) sees as critical for systems development and therefore calls for working with the three complexities (*dynamic*, *social*, *emerging*) as central forces (see Fig. 17.1). In order to avoid the classical model of a top-down implementation, the ministry asked schools to decide themselves if they wanted to become an NMS (meaning an "innovative school"), which needed a two-thirds acceptance by the school community (including parents).

Although many schools became interested in participating in this nation-wide reform agenda, the federal parts of the system had to be convinced, since they are vital parts of the decision-making process if schools want to become NMSs in a federal system. At the beginning, the educational authorities of the regions and the local authorities had been skeptical and opposed innovative opportunities in the historically conflicting structure between central decision-making and decentralized accountability. Historically, this conflict has often prevented school reform in Austria due to the dominating policy culture (Pelinka 1996).

System Activity 2: Centralizing Knowledge, Decentralizing Activity

In order to avoid downloading patterns of past controversy, Trompenaars and Hamden-Turner (2001) suggest a leadership approach for the twenty-first century which reconciles seemingly opposed values by asking the vital question "Can you make the distinctions necessary to leadership, yet integrate these into a viable whole?" (p. 3). For them "[v]alues are differences, and any difference posits a continuum with two contrasting ends" (Trompenaars and Hamden-Turner 2001), which express

values in tension. For them, conceiving of values as in opposition is not wholly satisfactory, and that is why they ask "After all, without decentralized activities, what is the purpose of centralized controls?" (p. 5). They note "that there is a subtle change of wording: 'centralization' has become *centralizing* (*knowledge*) and 'decentralization' has become *decentralizing* (*activity*). Control comes from the center, activity comes from the field. Instead of the two values negating each other, they complete each other" (pp. 5–6).

We have learned from Trompenaars and Hamden-Turner's meta-theory of leadership that the integration of the two values represented by the central ministry and the regional education authorities need not be seen as opposing forces but that it is possible to create a "culture space" which shares knowledge from multiple sources. To create the opportunity for a culture space to develop in the different provinces, the national ministry simply set the framework for the NMS (e.g., abolishing tracking, giving all children the chance for a high quality education, enhancing class work with variously gifted pupils from a wide ability range); the subsystems could define the best way of achieving the overall goals.

The different federal systems of the country took advantage of the space offered in different ways. Four (out of nine) provinces started, others took a wait-and-see stance until the second and third generations. Individual regions labeled the NMS with the names of the provinces (e.g., VMS for the Vorarlberg Middle School or SMS for the Styrian Middle School) to make regional differences visible and to foster identity of their own within a centralized school reform. In this way transparency, interaction, cooperation, and competition became vivid forces in the process. Thus, the framework of the NMS is communicated centrally, but the dialogues of the actors in the regions are the driving force to give the new school a face or an identity. This only works, however, if students in the classroom are also engaged in the dialogue.

This approach follows the logic of structural analogy, which exhibits a fractal pattern. A framework consisting of objectives and competences is given for each level of the system (national, regional, school, classroom) which has to be designed dialogically by the relevant actors. Whereas conventional reform delivery is characterized by an implementation mode of a given reform package, here the "culture space" has to be filled by the respective actors (stakeholders), which can only happen dialogically as a process of co-construction.

This process follows the different levels suggested by Scharmer in Fig. 17.1. The stage of motivation which can be reached is an indicator of the professionalism of all partners in the system – students, teachers, heads, administrators, etc. – through languaging.

System Activity 3: Facilitating Reform Development

In the autumn of 2008, we started on the journey of our NMS development facilitation with the first (pioneer) generation consisting of 67 schools. Building on the expertise of graduates from the Leadership Academy, we tried to represent the
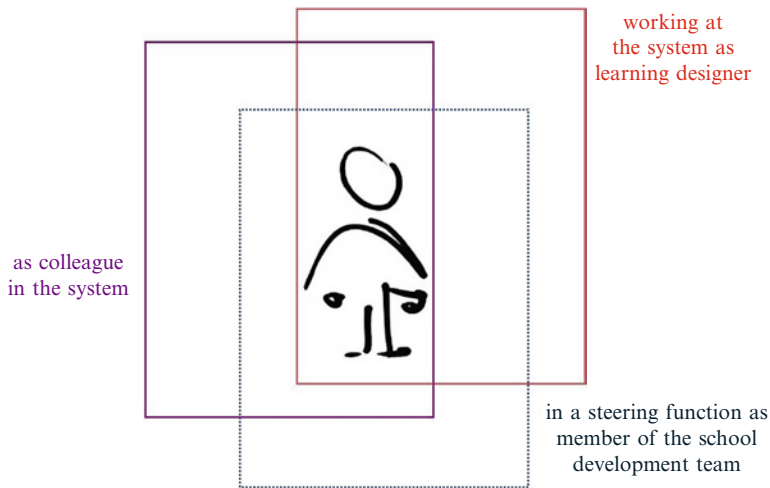
Fig. 17.9 Multiple roles of the "learning designer"

whole system of the emerging future of NMS in our social architecture and thereby bridge leadership with learning. To do so, we agreed on the following *principles for facilitating reform development:*

Principle 1: New Goals Require New Roles

Every school taking part in the NMS innovation process had to select a teacher to become a "learning designer" (Fig. 17.9).

Since this role did not exist previously we were able to portray it as a new task shifting the perspective from teaching to learning. As a colleague one is a teacher like all the others working *in* the system. In the "designer" role s/he takes on an extra role helping the school head to arrive at a new learning culture, which centers around the individual child with his or her individual potential. In doing so, s/he works *on* the system and in a steering function by becoming a member of the school development team.

Principle 2: Heterogeneity Requires Shared Leadership

Working with nonhomogeneous groups call for shared leadership of school heads and learning designers. The process of clarifying the roles and understanding within the different professional areas is a crucial first step in shifting self-awareness and responsibility so that all students attending *Neue Mittelschule* pilot schools are supported and challenged in every possible way so as to help them develop their gifts and talents.

Principle 3: Create Professional Learning Communities

Bringing the different levels of decentralization together and establishing heterogeneous regional and local groups in professional learning communities (PLCs) has proven a powerful means of capacity building (Wenger 1998; Wenger et al. 2002; Stoll and Louis 2007).

Principle 4: Foster Transparency and Open Dialogue

A nation-wide platform was created for fostering transparency by making different practices visible and encouraging open dialogue on different ways of dealing with crucial issues of NMS practice. There were debates and later on dialogues on tracking, assessing, learning, teamwork, collaboration between different types of schools – in cooperation with the national project management in the ministry. An EduMoodle platform offers an additional virtual space for communication.

Principle 5: Keep the End in Mind

Understanding of competence-oriented learning and performance-based assessment requires a "backward design" approach to curriculum development (Wiggins and McTighe 2005). This process for designing curriculum begins with the end in mind and designs toward that end, a process which helps determine the necessary (enabling) knowledge and skill, and the teaching needed to equip students to perform effectively.

Principle 6: Difference Makes a Difference

Establishing heterogeneous groups in teaching and learning requires a critical dialogue in respect of individualization and personalized learning. It is important for the school to become aware that it constructs differences "that make differences." It is of vital importance to become aware of their influences on the social construction of reality.

Principle 7: Innovation Is a Strategic Activity

System innovation builds on people and processes on the one hand and, on the other, bottom-up movements such as professional and systems development at the regional level as well as commitment at the school level (Fig. 17.10).

Intelligent use of intellectual and social capital is essential for system development. People are different. Situations and cultures are different. To create a culture change and a shift in mind-set, it is necessary to focus on special areas of leadership. To start a process or to reflect and evaluate a certain period of change and development,
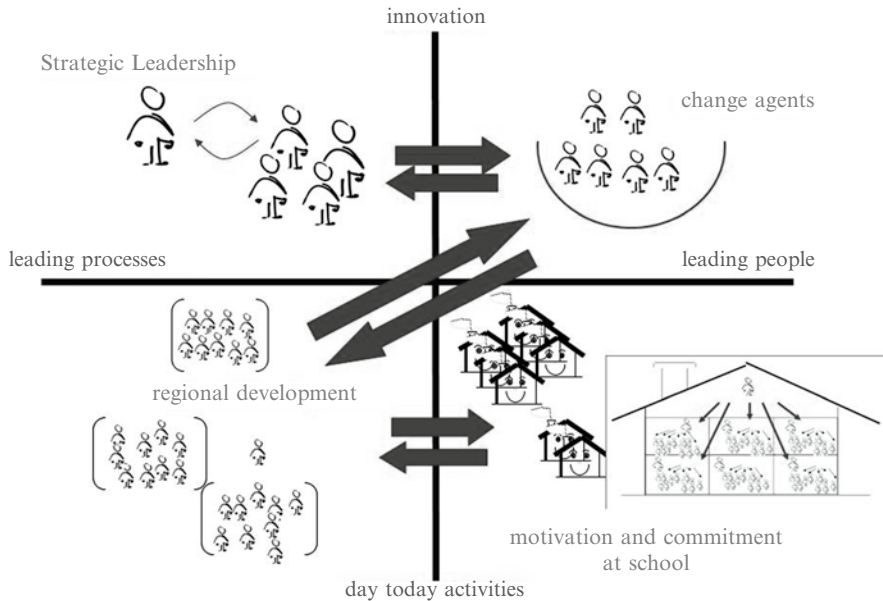
Fig. 17.10 The NMS innovation strategy (Riemann, Ulrich, Schley)

one has to focus on strategic issues. *Strategic leadership* creates the vision, faces the emerging future, and turns feelings of uncertainty into clarity and attractive goals. In our NMS development, this is the role and task of the Ministry of Education. It has opened the mind-set of stakeholders to educational innovation, creating a mission based on trust and courage, using the Scharmer concept of shifting Capitalism 2.0–3.0. Shifting to a 3.0 culture allows open dialogues, uses the power of networking, and works with personal responsibility and collective intelligence (Scharmer 2009a, b).

To sustain change dynamics, it is vital to build up a powerful network structure connecting people in all sectors, regions, hierarchy levels, and functions of the education system. Empowering these change agents leads to a culture of mutual understanding and creates a high level of energy directed by the demanding goals and development tasks (Fig. 17.7). Working with a nation-wide ecosystem of people sharing the goals, personalizing the vision, being identified by the power of leadership for learning, leads to the next step: building small units of people working together in PLCs and building the capacity for learning and student progress. Establishing a professional network of stakeholders in regional school management has helped to build centers of excellence as a supportive link in capacity building. The fourth field of action relates to a strategy which connects students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders in the different units of the educational system toward a higher level of motivation and commitment.

The fundamental understanding of our approach is not building on (external) experts implementing an innovation program but the activation of the energy in

School Year 2009/10

| Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | March | April | May | June |

National Learning Atelier

National Networking Conference

Regional Learning Ateliers

NMS Initiative Round (Ministry)

Local Learning Ateliers

National Learning Atelier

National Networking Conference

Regional Learning Ateliers

Local Learning Ateliers

NMS Initiative Round (Ministry)
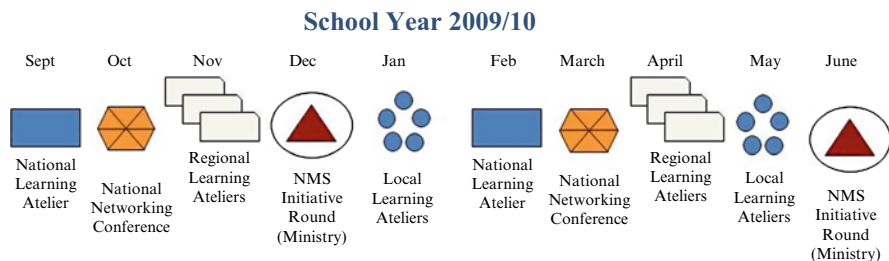
Fig. 17.11 Intervention strategies of the NMS development facilitation

the field. The role of facilitation is to clarify roles (e.g., learning designers [Fig. 17.9]) and procedures in the interplay between national, regional, and school levels. Such an intervention is shown in the time line of the NMS development facilitation during the school year 2009–2010 (Fig. 17.11).

The different symbols in Fig. 17.11 show the intervention strategies used by the NMS development facilitation: Meetings of *Initiative Rounds* on the ministerial level help reflecting the relationship between policy and practice in the innovation process. *Learning Ateliers* bring together the learning designers (67 in the first year, 176 in the second year) at the *national*, *regional,* and *local* levels. *Networking Conferences* with the school heads and regional coordinators are part of the professional strategy aimed at empowering the whole system and leading on to a higher level of motivation and commitment.

The Third Loop: Hierarchy Meets Network

The third loop takes the development further in the spiral dynamics and leads to collective presence and ecosystems of innovation. In the past few years, various networks sprang up in Austria aiming at bringing innovative actors in the field together on a *thematic* strand (e.g., LEA, NMS, net1 [network of innovative schools], ÖKOLOG [education for sustainable development], GeKoS [gender competence schools], IMST [innovation in mathematics and science teaching], etc.). They usually collaborate with a strong center serving as a think tank, strategic base and coordinating management structure and have regional nodes which act as places of diffusion of innovation in the provinces. Traditionally, these networks have contributed a lot to improvement in the core competence fields. However, they are often isolated from other parts of the system because of their strong interest and mission in creating change in their core competence areas. Seen from the perspective of the whole, there is a lot of productive energy (Fig. 17.7) in key areas but it is seldom connected to what Scharmer calls the national ecosystem.

This is where the third loop comes in: Connecting innovative people from different networks with a view to opening up perspectives and generating a flow of

creativity among "system thinkers in action" from different domains. To do so, the Minister of Education invited the members of the various networks to take part in a dialogue connecting the vertical (hierarchy) and horizontal (networks) forces of the system. Two thousand two hundred people were invited and, within 3 days, more than 1,100 agreed to take part. On this basis network meetings across the networks were planned in each of the nine provinces to stage an open dialogue connecting the hierarchy (ministry) with the innovative networks. Our role and goal as researchers and facilitators was to create a "culture space" for valuing differences and opening thinking. "Open thinking…

> … strives to remove barriers to allow for the expression of individual differences without getting locked into habitual patterns or unexamined assumptions.
>   … anticipates that change is inevitable and shows considerable elasticity without always jumping on bandwagons.
>   … acknowledges the role the external conditions play in making change easy or difficult for people
>   … is usually displayed in good listening skills, a non-judgmental approach to life, tolerance of differences and a lack of closed-mindedness." (Beck and Cowan 2006, 78)

The social architecture of the nine meetings entitled "Network in Dialogue with the Minister" (1 day each) built on the following components: The minister offered a dialogue, inspired the audience and opened minds for new perspectives, giving the innovative practitioners a clear view of her vision for the future of the Austrian schools. As her ministry also comprises culture and the arts, a short video clip on excellence in symphony music including a world-famous Austrian conductor was shown to create a deeper "understanding of the primary field conditions that structure these patterns of emergence" (Scharmer 2007, 293). By comparing and contrasting professionalism in different segments of society they were invited to find new ways of what the steps from "open mind" to "open heart" to "open will" could mean to them. Student performances from the fields of theater and music complemented the power of art in education.

Another important topic of the event program was storytelling: Three leaders of initiatives which impacted on student learning were asked to tell their stories of their adventures in changing mind-sets, attitudes, interactions, and systems, all directed at open and personalized learning, participation and activity, innovation and creativity. We borrowed the idea of the "positive change core" which is embedded in innovators' stories from "Appreciative Inquiry" (AI), a "cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system 'life', when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological and human terms" (Cooperrider and Whitney 1999, 10).

AI was also used to structure the afternoon by involving "the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential" (Cooperrider and Whitney 1999, 10). Network members were asked to mix with other networks and ask each other about their success stories in an endeavor to change attitudes and mind-sets so as to bring about change. By listening to each others' stories they began to "pay increasing attention to what is coming in through the 'back door' of one's mind. It is at this stage, that groups begin to function as an instrument

for an emerging future" (Scharmer 2007, 293). By deepening their mutual understanding they started "crystallizing" core themes, patterns and puzzles, a process which Scharmer characterizes as the shift from network to ecosystem (Fig. 17.1).

The minister took part in the event, empowering the audience and inviting participants to build achievement on trust within the new school, which no longer means only the NMS. This led to a high level of energy, created an open space with a shared mind-set and mutual understanding of shaping the future of learning and creating inspiring places for the next generation. As a follow-up, a series of network meetings are planned and organized for each Austrian province, in order to maintain the spirit and impetus of innovation that had been experienced during the meetings, during which people thought together, felt together, and acted together.

The process of capacity building with more than 1,000 stakeholders of innovation at school met the needs and desires of many people in networks and regional institutions. The minister herself experienced a learning curve with regard to issues, innovative ideas, and a shared sense of purpose and principles. She showed her awareness by seeing, sensing, and reflecting along with the audience. Her impressions were emotional and inspiring. Being so close to the members of the networks shifted the level of trust and created mutual understanding. The specific constellation of diverse players collectively formed "a vehicle for seeing current possibilities and sensing emerging opportunities" (Scharmer 2007, 311). It consisted of strong impressions of a chaotic system (a synthesis from chaos and order). A total of 80–200 members met at 10–25 round tables using communication rules of AI, Open Space, and Transformational Change perspectives in flexible arrangements.

For us, the experience was unique in the way that we experienced the members of the various networks in dynamic interaction with rectors of the university colleges of education, political heads of regional administration, and specialists practising the grammar of the social field and shifting from debate to dialogue. At the end of the event, hearts and minds seemed opened and connected; a mutual space of trust, creativity, and dialogues seemed to create a generative flow. For many, it was a first step from transactional to transformational communication. It is our task now to go on and establish regional networks to connect the different ideas and ways of understanding the role and shape of the new school connecting leadership with learning.

Evaluation and Research

Several activities and measures have been taken to evaluate or research into the LEA:

- LCS (Leadership Competence scale): A self-assessment instrument which is used at the beginning and at the end of one generation by the participants, which is analyzed from a meta-perspective (Zürich University).
- Ten case studies looking into how school leaders put their learning experiences into practice (Innsbruck University; Schratz et al. 2010).

- A quantitative study comparing heads who took part in the LEA with school heads who had not participated in the LEA (dissertation at Vienna University).
- An OECD case study: "The Leadership Academy was selected by the OECD Improving School Leadership activity as an innovative case study because of its system-wide approach to leadership development, its emphasis on leadership for improved schooling outcomes, its innovative program contents and design, and its demonstrated potential to achieve effective outcomes" (Stoll et al. 2008, 215).
- Investigations into specific aspects of the LEA (e.g., micro arts, the language of leadership).

Evaluation of, and research into, the NMS is coordinated by the BIFIE (National Agency for Educational Research, Innovation and Development of the Austrian School System), which is organized on formative and summative domains.

Outlook

Matters of innovation and change are often seen as merely organizational or technological questions, turning complexity into a series of (trans)actions from policy to practice. However, dealing with complexity does not mean creating more complex structures of planning, acting, controlling, and developing systems. The shift to an organic understanding of growth is related to openness and trust, which best help in reducing complexity of systems: Speaking openly opens others. In our work with the three system-wide initiatives described, for us Scharmer's trilogy of "Open Mind," "Open Heart," and "Open Will" has become part of the professional culture (Scharmer 2007). By doing so, we have been actors and observers of a shift in mind-set and culture, overcoming the traditional abyss between policy and practice. The field work with many stakeholders on all levels of the system has taught us the wisdom of many in the collective intelligence of practice and opened up new dimensions of dealing with system-wide development.

The performance of the school system is based on an understanding of the different situations, contexts, demands, and challenges within each organizational unit. Consequently, developing performance is not simply achieved by sending individuals on a training course but a journey through the "field structure of attention" (Scharmer), which builds on different modes of (self)awareness. "Self-awareness is about knowing how your actions affect other people" (Owen 2009, 287). The level of awareness on how "system thinkers in action" (Fullan) is able to develop the whole system by "presencing" (Scharmer 2007, 242) has increased during the last 5 years. We are becoming aware of an emerging organizational learning culture which is characterized by a spirit of innovation, commitment, and new attitudes to dealing with complexity, facing dynamics, taking risks, and learning from mistakes.

Looking back on our journey at this juncture, we particularly see four distinct powers which have served as levers in successful system development: strategic leadership concepts, leading change strategies, building infrastructure, and sustainable

leadership through participation. It remains an exciting experience to continue building on the collective wisdom, realising that key persons are now better coping with emerging complexity. Rather than solving a problem by adding just another layer of regulation or infrastructure, we need a process of co-evolution that allows people to see and act from the emerging whole.

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Chapter 18
School Leadership in Chile: Breaking the Inertia*

José Weinstein, Gonzalo Muñoz, and Dagmar Raczynski

A Brief Description of the Context

Over the past two decades, Chile has implemented far-reaching educational reforms. The goal of this effort has been to improve the quality and equity of the education provided to boys, girls, and adolescents. It is not a coincidence that the country leads Latin America in access to formal schooling. This is the most tangible result of a national effort to extend opportunities for access and retention in school. Between 1990 and 2009, the public education budget quintupled; legislation was passed in order to ensure the right to 12 years of free and mandatory schooling; massive programs designed to provide nutrition, text books, and access to computers were implemented; the curriculum was updated at all levels; teachers' salaries were improved; and the amount of time spent in school multiplied, moving most students from a double school day (in which some would attend a morning session and others would go to classes in the afternoon) to a single, full day format.

However, Chilean society is not satisfied with the education that is currently available. In fact, in the light of the improved coverage achieved, the expectations of students and their families have increased. The goal of reaching higher education is virtually a universal desire, which many do not manage to fulfill. There is also an

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unprecedented demand for quality for all. Recent laws such as the Preferential School Subsidy Law (2008) and the General Education Law (2009) have established the right to a quality education, drawing on a growing public desire to improve results, particularly those of schools that serve the most at-risk population. In the development of this "culture of quality," the periodic assessments of student learning in key courses have played an important role by establishing standards that all schools must reach (Taut et al. 2009). The annual publication of results of these learning assessments – and of the university admissions examination – constitutes a national political event, and the reiterated detection of stagnation and inequality tends to be a large problem for educational decision-makers (Weinstein and Muñoz 2009).[1]

The leadership issue is taking on increasing importance in this context of strong pressure on the school system. For the first time, schools can be closed or subjected to administrative changes if they fail to meet certain quality standards. New, decentralized solutions are being sought out, and there is an effort to clarify the powers and functions of those involved at the national level (such as the Ministry of Education), at the intermediate level (municipal school owners), and at the school level, all of which has decreased the amount of ambiguity in this area.[2] There is a growing desire to hold direct providers of educational services responsible for the results that they promise to provide – which are generally not reached –, while those responsible for education at the national level are expected to generate the needed conditions (such as financing or setting standards) for school management bodies to be successful. This pressure has become an omnipresent factor that is influencing the daily lives of all educational service providers, from teachers to school managers and public and private school owners. The school cannot isolate itself from this demand to improve that has moved from being voluntary to being mandatory.

Principals form part of a strategic sector that has not been duly explored in its potential for contributing to educational progress. In the last 5 years a series of ministerial and legislative initiatives have viewed school leadership as a new and *economic* opportunity to improve schools. Good performance in this small group of leaders could have a rapid impact on a large group of teachers (note that in Chile there is one principal for every 20 teachers). Also, research has identified school leadership as the second-most influential intra-school factor in the improvement of education (Sammons et al. 2009; Marzano et al. 2005; McKinsey and Company 2007). The set of actions aimed at principals in Chile has not been developed as a systematic and articulated policy. Yet, it has allowed the system to break the existing inertia, drawing attention to the importance of leadership.

Before we address the issue of management/leadership itself, it is important to highlight a distinctive characteristic of the Chilean school system, namely the

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[1] International measurements have shown a positive evolution in learning results (for example, a jump in language skills results in Chile between the PISA 2000 and PISA 2006 tests), which do not match the lack of progress shown in national measurements. This has been the object of recent studies such as those of Alfaro and Gormaz (2009) and Donoso and Lima (2009).

[2] While since the 1980s the direct administration of schools has been handled by municipal and private subsidized school owners, in the 1990s national programs and educational improvement actions from the Ministry of Education developed. This direct and systematic action from the central to the local level, made the Ministry co-responsible for the results reached. However, the laws that have been passed over the last 5 years reverse this situation. In a sense, this shift involves completing administrative decentralization with real educational responsibility.
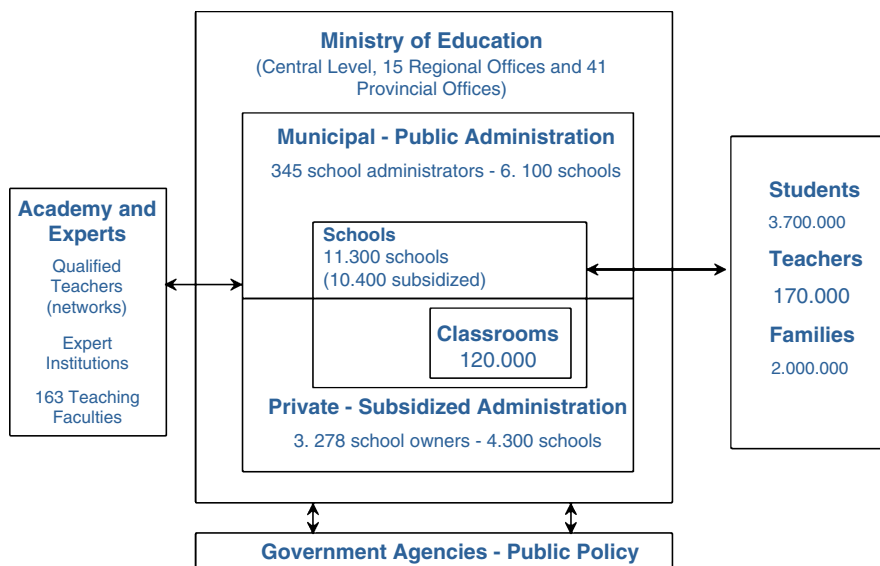
Fig. 18.1 Structure and key data: Chilean educational system (*Source*: Updated MINEDUC data (2006))

importance of the private sector. This refers particularly to school owners who provide education that is financed with public resources.[3] In contrast to the great majority of Latin American nations, since the 1980s Chile's central government does not directly run schools; municipalities have been responsible for managing public education, but more than half of the student population attends private subsidized schools. As such, most of the middle class and a growing part of the lower income population are educated in these private for- or not-for profit schools, and the trend points towards their increased growth. There is thus a duality between these two types of institutions within the school system, in the sense that many of the standards that are applied to the municipal sector are not applied to the private subsidized one (Bellei 2007). The management function is no exception. For example, while one sector, the municipal one, has rigid standards for teacher selection and remuneration,[4] the other, private, has broad discretion in these aspects. A comparative intra-system reference, that highlights the duality between the two sub-systems, both with public financing, is therefore inevitable in this article.

Figure 18.1 shows the main units in the Chilean school system and the key numbers involved. This provides a more complete description of how the system works and is organized. The left-hand side shows universities and institutes that specialize in

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[3] The private subsidized subsector coexists with a traditional paid private one that serves the national elite- around 7% of all students- and is wholly funded by direct contributions from the families.

[4] The Teacher Statute promulgated in 1991 incorporated shared management standards for teachers and school managers such as selection processes, remuneration, and terminations that must be respected by municipal administrations. It also contains some general norms that must be respected by the private sector. The Statute has undergone various changes since 1991, but it has always been based on the principle of having specific regulation on teachers' working conditions, which distinguishes them from other workers and sets limits on the role of the municipal school owner.

education, the "providers" of the system that train teachers and executive personnel. The middle lists those responsible for the operation of education itself: the Ministry of Education (which handles financing, policy design, and regulation), public and private school administrators, and educational units. The right-hand side of the figure shows the main "users" and stakeholders in the school system: students, families, and teachers. Chile currently has over 11,000 schools, over 3,500 administrators or owners (345 of whom run municipal schools), and nearly 170,000 teachers, all of whom work in function of an approximate enrollment of 3.7 million students.

Who Are Chile's School Principals?

Chile's teaching staff of 180,000 professionals includes approximately 16,000 school managers. Of these, 8,000 work as principals[5] and the remainder perform other management functions such as pedagogic leader, inspector general, guidance counselor, or assistant principal. The profiles of these employees vary along the lines of municipal or private schools, as shown in Table 18.1.

It is important to note that some of these characteristics distinguish Chilean school principals from those serving in other countries. The most recent OECD

Table 18.1 Characteristics of principals in Chile

Characteristics of principals in Chile (N=7,900)	National context	Relative differences by type of school[a]
Sex	52% female and 48% male	66% female in PS and 38% in MUN
Age	54 years average	57 in MUN, 54 in PP and 51 in PS
Initial training	60% elementary school education; 23% secondary school; 8% special education; 8% early childhood education; 1% no degree in the field of education	77% elementary school education in MUN, 45% in PS and 22% in PS
		17% secondary school education in MUN, 27% in PS, 43% in PP
Graduate training	70% university education +1 year; 44% master's degree and 4% doctorate	Much higher in MUN: 89% undergrad+1, 61% master's degree
Years of service	26 years average	30 years in MUN, 21 in PS and 24 in PP
Salary	38% earn more than US$2,000 per month; 19% earn less than US$1,500	31% earn more than US$2,000 per month in MUN, 38% in PS and 67% in PP

Source: Generated by the authors based on official statistics of MINEDUC (http://w3app.mineduc.cl/DedPublico/anuarios_estadisticos) and data from our study CEPPE 2010
[a]*MUN* municipal, *PS* private subsidized *PP* paid private

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[5] There are around 3,000 very small rural schools that have one, two, or three teachers and no school administrators. In these cases, a teacher is also responsible for management duties.

(2008) and UNESCO (2008) reports show that a larger percentage of Chilean principals are serving in the private sector. They are also distinctive on account of their high average age and the amount of time that they have spent in post-graduate studies (diplomas and master degrees). Comparisons among types of schools in Chile show that municipal school principals are typically older, have longer experience, more post-graduate training, and a higher percentage of them are male.

The lower prestige enjoyed by principals within the school system, with the exception of elitist-paid private education, deserves special attention. The limited salary differentiation between principals and classroom teachers[6] is a reflection of the degree to which their position is undervalued. This has led to a lack of appropriate applicants for vacant principal positions, particularly in municipal schools, with serious consequences, given the advanced age of the current principals. This low level of prestige also is expressed in the lack of consideration of their opinion on various educational issues, the fact that they did not play a significant role in the reform process at any level (local, provincial, or national) and that, in contrast to teachers, they do not have their own organization or agency that represents them and allows them to express their views.

Procedures for applications to a leadership position vary by school type. By law, municipal school principals must re-apply formally every 5 years through a competitive process. The mayor, on the basis of a pre-selection process carried out by a municipal commission decides appointments. Subsidized or paid private schools select principals through less formal and non-competitive processes which tend to be a "personal invitation" extended to the candidate by the school owners. As a result of this different form of recruiting there tends to be a *quick route* of access to the position in private schools while in public schools, candidates tend to move through progressive levels of responsibility before achieving a principal position.[7]

The Formal Definition of the Principal's Role and Reality

What is the function of a school manager today in Chile? According to current regulations,[8] the main role of the principal is to oversee and lead the school's institutional education project.

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[6] Principals' salaries tend to be 20% higher than those of classroom teachers in municipal and subsidized private schools. The difference is only greater in paid private schools. In fact, the Teacher Statute sets a 25% base salary cap for a principal position, but salary increases based on teaching experience can be as high as 100%. It is important to note that principals tend to be hired for a full workday (44 h per week) while teachers tend to work part time (an average of 33 h per week).

[7] Our study shows that 82% of municipal school principals went through a formal selection process and/or public competition, while 80% of those in subsidized private schools arrived at the position as a result of a direct invitation by the school owner or because they were owners of the school. The rate of such appointments of principals in paid private schools is 68%.

[8] For the past 5 years, legislation has promoted various initiatives regarding principals that range from the formulation of a Framework for Good School Leadership (2005) to the identification of tasks that principals must carry out; among them, the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of the goals and objectives of the school; supervise classes and support to the technical-pedagogical work and professional development of teachers; ensure that parents are informed regularly of the schools' operation and the progress made by their children.

Principals are required to:

- Formulate, monitor, and evaluate the goals and objectives of the school as well as develop syllabi and strategies for their implementation;
- Organize and provide guidance in technical–pedagogical tasks and professional development of teachers; and
- Take the necessary steps to ensure that parents regularly receive information on the school's operation and their children's progress.

The current regulatory emphasis, which privileges an approach to pedagogical leadership over administrative leadership, is so important that the law actually specifies that principals should supervise teachers in the classroom.[9] Similarly, standards have been generated that indicate that the principal as head of the school council, a mandatory advisory body in all subsidized schools, municipal or private, and composed of parent, student, and teacher representatives, must promote joint participation of the school community. The councils receive periodic reports on the school's educational progress and should issue opinions related to the school's education project or annual plan of action.[10]

However, this regulatory desire that principals operate as *educational leaders* is not systematically monitored because their performance in this respect is not normally evaluated.[11] Furthermore, these definitions are not expressed in real powers for principals, particularly in the municipal sector. In fact, not only are municipal school owners restricted in what they can do through a series of procedures and norms, but also the decision-making that has been devolved to the local level tends to operate at intermediary levels rather than at the school level. Thus, there is no "school empowerment" as such, which could mark a difference between public and private schools (see Table 18.2).

Table 18.2 shows the differences in terms of the *real attributes* that the principals report as having in the various types of schools. As one can see, there are two substantially different situations in how principals exercise their role. While principals in the municipal sector have practically no responsibility for the management of their human resources (setting salaries, hiring and firing teachers, shaping the management team), principals in the private sector generally have all of these powers.

The same is true to a certain degree, in regard to the management of financial resources (use of the budget, investments, and equipment) or educational tasks such as defining the curriculum and courses offered and contracting technical support. However, as we will see below, these different *institutional conditions* do not necessarily or *independently* lead to the development of stronger leadership practices in the private sector.

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[9] The General Education Law states that "members of the management teams in subsidized schools or those that receive government funds must engage in teacher supervision in the classroom in order to better meet these objectives." (Our translation.)

[10] The law authorizes school owners to provide Councils with the power to make decisions regarding a set of issues. This more participatory option practically has not been explored.

[11] There is a paradox in that municipal sector classroom teachers are evaluated every 4 years using a sophisticated centralized system that includes the analysis of a classroom teaching video. There are consequences that range from economic incentives for those who perform well to mandatory training and possible termination for those who consistently earn poor evaluations.

Table 18.2 Attributes of principals in Chile (OECD Categories). Percentage of principals who state that they have a high or very high decision-making power regarding the following issues (CEPPE 2010)

Area	What decision-making power does your school have in the following areas?	% high or very high autonomy	MUN	PS	PP
Human resources	Hire teachers	66.6	15.9	91.9	97.6
	Fire teachers	56.3	5.4	79.9	89.4
	Set teacher remuneration	40	1.1	55.8	77.7
	Define composition of the school management team	70.8	34.4	89.6	92.6
Financial resources	Define annual budget	48.4	9.6	66.2	73.1
	Allocate approved resources	57.9	25.5	74.9	80.1
	Investments in infrastructure and equipment	52.1	25.1	66.5	67.9
Curriculum	Define curriculum (courses)	73.2	48.9	85	94
	Define course plan and program	64.9	38.6	77.2	86.5
	Select textbooks	80.8	76.5	81.1	94.4
Student policies	Define student admission requirements	75.8	58.7	88.6	99.1
	Set disciplinary and coexistence policy	90.1	86	91.8	96.2
	Apply external learning tests	75	65.6	79.6	87
Improvement	Hire external technical assistance	62.1	41.4	72.4	81.2
	Design schoolimprovement plans	90.1	88.6	89.8	97.3
	Implement school improvement plans	89.6	83.7	92.4	96.9

It is worth noting that existing legislation increasingly understands leadership as not limited to the principal but covering also all of the school's management team. The goal is to promote distributed leadership, highlighting the role of what is known as the pedagogic leader whose task is to support the principal in pedagogical matters.[12] We will return to the functioning of the management team when we consider pedagogical and curricular matters.

The Practices of School Leadership: The Weakness of Instructional Leadership

The ongoing national study to which we have been referring, allows us to explore the profile of management/leadership practices (those of the principal and the pedagogic leader) in primary schools throughout Chile.[13] Our research follows the

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[12] Pedagogical leaders have existed since the 1970s (Núñez et al. 2010) and are part of the normal operation of schools with the exception of very small ones. They tend to be classroom teachers with graduate training in the areas of curricular development or teaching.

[13] For further information on the conceptual framework created for this study, see Weinstein et al. (2009).

Category	Practices
Setting directions	Construction of a shared vision
	Promoting the acceptance of group objectives
Making an effort to motivate others regarding their own work, establishing a "moral purpose"	High Expectations
Developing people	Paying attention to and providing individual support to teachers
Building the knowledge and skills that staff require in order to fulfill organizational goals and for commitment and resilience, which are the attributes that they need in order to continue to meet them.	Intellectual attention and support provided to teachers
	Modeling (ongoing interaction and visibility with teachers and students)
Redesigning the organization	Building a collaborative culture
	Structuring an organization that facilitates work
Establishing work conditions that allow the staff to fully develop their motivations and abilities	Creating a productive relationship with families and community
	Connecting the school to its context and its opportunities
Instructional leadership	Hiring staff
Managing teaching and learning in the school	Providing technical support to teachers (supervision, evaluation, coordination)
	Monitoring teaching and learning
	Ensuring that matters that are outside of the focus of their work do not distract staff members.

Fig. 18.2 Leithwood's school leadership model (2006) (*Source*: Adapted by the authors based on Leithwood et al. (2006)).

school leadership conceptual model developed by Leithwood et al. (2006), which postulates that "effective leaders" – those who manage to motivate teachers and impact teaching and learning – show a single repertoire of 14 leadership practices that can be grouped into the following four categories (see Fig. 18.2).[14]

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[14] The empirical studies that describe this model are based on the opinions of teachers regarding the various areas and practices mentioned. Each practice is measured using an agreement/disagreement scale. Our study followed this approach, adjusting the indicators to the situation of Chile and applying the questionnaire to a random sample of primary schools in urban areas. The questionnaire questioned five teachers in each school on the principal's practices as well as those of the pedagogic leader. A set of 42 indicators were defined for principals and 13 indicators were set for pedagogic leaders that, in the case of the latter, correspond mainly to the categories of managing instruction and developing individuals.

Table 18.3 Leadership practices of principals and head teachers according to teachers

Category	Practices	Percentage of those who strongly agreed in the school	
		Principal	Head teacher
Setting directions	Vision (construction of a shared vision)	48	
	Objectives (promoting acceptance of group objectives)	46	
	High expectations	50	48
Developing people	Individual attention and support for teachers	46	55
	Intellectual support and stimulation	35	41
	Modeling (ongoing and visible interaction with teachers and students)	48	52
Redesigning the organization	Building a collaborative culture	49	
	Structuring an organization that facilitates work	39	38
	Creating a productive relationship with families and the community	42	
	Connecting the school with its environment and the opportunities that it presents	35	
Instructional leadership	Hiring personnel	41	
	Providing technical support to teachers (supervision, evaluation, coordination)	33	33
	Monitoring teachers' practices and students' learning	46	54
	Ensuring that the staff is not distracted by matters aside from the main focus of their work	26	

Source: Based on the teacher survey from the School Leadership and the Quality of Education study, CEPPE 2010

Table 18.3 presents teacher views on how each practice[15] is exercised by Chilean school principals. According to the teachers interviewed, between 26% and 50% of principals reflect the practices that were considered important. The most prevalent leadership practices are associated with the category of setting directions[16] as well

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[15] The unit of observation is the school and the values described correspond to the average percentage of teachers in schools who state that they "very much agree" that the principal carries out the task listed in the indicators defined for each practice. This format was chosen in order to synthesize the information because when it comes to evaluating "the boss," the population tends to be uncritical and to respond with important components of social desirability. The application of this stricter criterion increases the likelihood that the principal actually carries the practice in question in a systematic manner and not only sporadically.

[16] Note that a factorial analysis of the spreadsheet of correlations between the indicators of school leadership practices allows us to establish the following three large categories for the case of Chile: establishing leadership and redesigning the organization (explains 52.6% of the total variance); developing individuals (explains 4.6%); and managing teaching (explains 3.2%).

as some specific practices in the other three categories. These include creating a collaborative culture, modeling, attention and individual support for teachers, monitoring teachers practices and student learning. Avoiding distraction among the staff, stimulating teachers intellectually and providing instructional support, were the least prevalent leadership practices. In other words, less than half of the primary schools had strong leadership, and in no more than a third of the institutions was there instructional leadership, which the literature identifies as essential for improving learning outcomes.

The fact that principals fail to play an important pedagogical role can be corroborated through another key aspect analyzed in our study: the amount of time that principals say they allocate to the various areas and practices. Asking about the frequency with which the principals carry out a series of activities allowed us to confirm that they engage less frequently in activities related to instructional leadership than in setting directions and re-designing the organization. Principals themselves indicate that instructional activities are those that they most frequently delegate to others.

Further support for this conclusion is presented in the UNESCO (2008) study that compares 11 countries around the world. Here, Chile's school principals are ranked very low in areas such as "support classroom teachers," "attend lessons and discuss classroom visits" and "provide suggestions" (Table 5.2, p. 94). They were strong in all administrative activities, with notable exceptions in the areas of "monitoring progress," "keeping progress reports" and "coordinating special measures" (Table 5.1, p. 93).

In order to understand the table, one must be aware of the role of the pedagogic leader in Chilean schools, whose task is to work with the principal in supporting instruction.[17] According to the teacher assessments, between one-third and 55% of pedagogic leaders carry out one or more of the practices listed. In general, they were evaluated better than the principals.

The most frequent practice is individual attention and support,[18] followed closely by monitoring and modeling. The weakest practices in this case also correspond to providing instructional support to teachers and structuring an organization that facilitates work in the classroom, as well as intellectual stimulation for classroom teachers. The weakest area is thus the one that is at the heart of a pedagogic head position.

It is important to note that when the principal is more involved with instruction, the pedagogic leader also worries more about this issue and vice versa. Thus, the correlation coefficients between the practices of the principal and the pedagogic head are all positive and statistically significant, fluctuating between 0.378 and 0.506.

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[17] The position of pedagogic head or academic coordinator exists in 72% of the schools in the sample.

[18] The survey showed that teachers consult pedagogic heads more frequently than principals when there are pedagogical problems and that the principal is consulted less frequently than fellow teachers.

This underscores that teamwork strengthens both functions and does not work with a logic of replacement given that the principal's pedagogic leadership is most likely not something that can be replaced but something that should be *strengthened.* Following Spillane (2006) the data provides evidence of a distributed leadership pattern based on co-performance or parallel performance. The highest correlation coefficients correspond to leading instruction and developing persons, a finding that also has been observed in other studies (Anderson et al. 2008).

The principals' weakness in regard to managing instruction is manifested also in their lack of criticism when it comes to evaluating teachers in their schools. Classroom teachers in Chilean municipal schools are evaluated every 4 years through a mandatory procedure that uses different types of information and opinions.[19] The principal's view of their teachers is systematically the most complacent one. This can be observed in Fig. 18.3 below, which compares the evaluation of the principals of a cohort of teachers (2009) with the one carried out by a panel of experts.[20] It is difficult to conclude that opinion as complacent as these on the part of principals goes hand in hand with its converse feature: the lack of competences and interest in providing instructional support to classroom teaching (Fig. 18.3).

Final Results of Teacher Evaluation (2009)

Reports by the Principal and Head Teacher   6.30%   93.70%

Portfolio+Interview Evaluation   63.80%   36.20%

■ Teachers who fail to reach the expected level
■ Teachers who reach the expected level
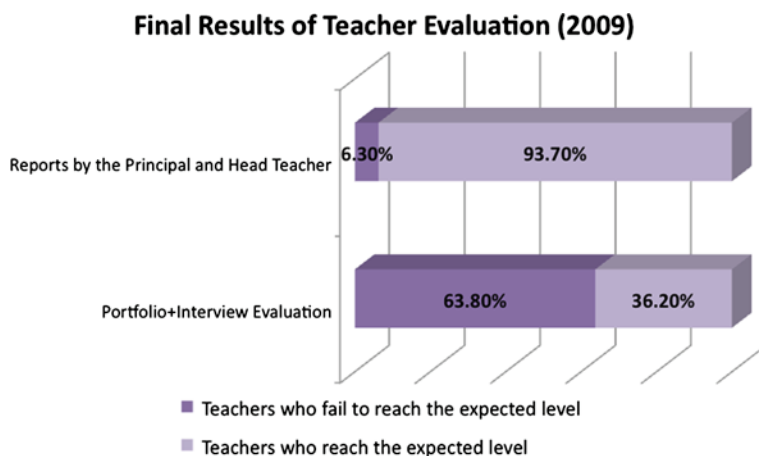
Fig. 18.3 Teacher evaluation according to principals (*Source*: Docente Más. www.docentemas.cl)

[19] The Ministry of Education has administered teacher evaluation centrally since 2003 (see footnote 13). In order to evaluate each teacher, his or her own opinion is considered along with that of another classroom teacher and the school's principal as well as a through a teaching portfolio and the film of one class. For more information on this interesting process, see www.docentemas.cl.

[20] In our ongoing study, we are testing various interpretations in order to search out plausible explanations for this acritical stance. They include the possibility that principals are particularly undemanding (*hypothesis of complicity)* or that they do not understand the conceptual categories that would allow them to evaluate teachers' performance in the classroom (*hypothesis of ignorance*).

Gender, Educational Results, and Type of School: Variables Associated with the Practices of Leadership

The second column of Table 18.3 refers to the figure of head teacher or academic coordinator present in Chilean schools, whose task is to assume pedagogical leadership, alongside with the principal in the improvement of instruction. Our national study explored variations in the school leadership profile at the descriptive level using multiple variables.[21] Table 18.4 presents the results in the three variables that show statistically significant differences in at least six of the 14 leadership practices considered.

The data show that special attention should be paid to the following relationships:

School Leadership and Principal's Gender

Female principals exercise stronger leadership than their male counterparts in all 14 practices, and this difference is maintained if one controls for teacher gender. In other words, differences are observed regardless of whether the teachers surveyed are women or men.[22]

School Leadership and SIMCE (Standardized Learning Assessment) Scores

Nine of the 14 leadership practices have a statistically significant relationship with the school results measured by the SIMCE score of the schools standardized by socio-economic level.[23] These practices correspond to the categories "showing direction," "developing individuals," and "instructional leadership." In each practice, a more positive evaluation is associated with a better-standardized SIMCE score.[24]

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[21] The analysis considers the following variables: type of school, socio-economic level of the student body, enrollment, average level of the school in mathematics and language on the national learning test in fourth grade in 2007 and 2008, and the principal's gender, experience, and training.

[22] Fifty-seven per cent of the primary school principals in the sample for which the leadership profile was built are women.

[23] The study applied a technical procedure in order to ensure correct standardization of the SIMCE results in accordance with the students' socio-economic level.

[24] This result also is supported by other studies performed in Chile. Volante (2008) verifies that there is a statistically significant relationship in secondary schools between the exercise of instructional leadership, high expectations regarding the students' potential for learning on the part of the teachers, and their results on the University Selection Test (Prueba de Selección Universitaria, PSU). Lagos (2009) finds that school leadership affects students' academic achievement controlling for other factors, and that its effect is partly indirect, mediated by the work of the teachers. Majluf and Hurtado (2008) find that schools' learning results depend on teacher motivation and "soft management" attributes of the principal. Similarly, Thieme (2005) and Garay (2008) underscore the importance of transformational leadership that is expressed in technical competencies combined with charisma, intellectual stimulation, and principals' levels of inspiration.

Table 18.4 Profile of the principal's practices: some associated variables (percentage of "strongly agree" responses)[a]

| Practices | Total | Principal's Gender | | Type of school[b] | | | Standardized SIMCE Results[c] | | |
		Female	Male	MUN	PS	PP	Low	Medium	High
Setting directions									
Vision (construction of a shared vision)	48	52	41				42	49	52
Objectives (promoting acceptance of group objectives)	46	50	40	50	44	37	40	47	50
High expectations	50	54	45				44	52	56
Developing people									
Individual attention and support for teachers	46	49	42	48	45	41	42	47	48
Intellectual support and stimulation	35	38	29						
Modeling (ongoing and visible interaction with teachers and students)	48	54	40				43	49	52
Redesigning the organization									
Building a collaborative culture	49	52	43						
Structuring an organization that facilitates work	39	43	34						
Creating a productive relationship with families and the community	42	46	37						
Connecting the school with its environment and the opportunities that it presents	35	38	32						
Instructional leadership									
Hiring personnel	41	44	35	45	39	34	36	42	45
Providing pedagogical support to teachers (supervision, evaluation, coordination)	33	36	29	37	32	23	29	34	36
Monitoring teachers' practices and students' learning	46	49	41	47	46	37	40	47	51
Avoiding distraction of the staff from the main focus of their work	26	28	23	30	25	17	22	26	29

Source: Developed based on the teacher survey from the study "Management Leadership and Quality of Education"

[a] Only the percentages for which there were significant differences are listed (median differences test, bilateral test, level of significance of 0.05)

[b] *MUN* municipal, *PS* private subsidized, *PP* paid private

[c] Standard SIMCE by socio-economic level of the student body that attends the school

School Leadership and School Ownership

School leadership recognized by teachers is greater in municipal schools than in private ones. The results show similarity between municipal and private subsidized schools in some practices and advantages in municipal schools in others. Furthermore, the data demonstrate that there is a systematic difference between these two sectors and paid private schools, which are consistently in a weaker position. The greatest similarities between municipal schools and private subsidized ones are observed in "instructional leadership" and "individual attention and support for teachers."

The three associations that emerge from the study have different levels of complexity when they are interpreted. The relationship between school leadership practices and school learning results fully matches research findings obtained in different countries and can be fitted easily into Leithwood's conceptual model and those of other experts on the subject.

The same is not true of the gender factor. How can we explain this systematic difference in favor of women serving as principals? What abilities or skills do female principals in Chile develop or possess that men do not manage to deploy? While it is true that this result has been found in other studies (UNESCO 2008), there is a need to identify, first, if it is specifically a gender issue or if it is related to differences in training, age, or the unique characteristics of the schools in which female principals work such as their size and the socio-economic level of the students' families.

Finally, the higher appreciation of school leadership in *municipal schools* in 6 of the 14 practices is a counter-intuitive finding that clashes with the idea that private schools offer better teaching and higher quality education. The hypotheses that could be used to try to explain this result should include at least that of greater complicity and lack of criticism on the part of classroom teachers in the municipal sector with their principals because subjectively they consider them to *be part* of the staff. This stands in contrast to private schools, where principals and teachers belong to a different organizational level. In the end, principals in the municipal sector are seen as teachers who are performing another role, while those in private schools are seen as executives appointed by school owners.[25] But above and beyond this hypothesis, what needs to be said is that the greater management freedom and power of private school principals is not directly related to better leadership practices and stronger involvement in instructional issues.

The Preparation of Principals: Quantity Without Quality or Appropriateness

We know that training and education is a key factor in explaining the performance of principals (OECD 2008).

In Chile, principals have teacher training qualifications as their basic education level. According to official statistics (Ministry of Education 2008), 98.9% of

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[25] This is when the principals are not the school's owner. In our study, 18% of the principals in the sample also own the school at which they work.

Table 18.5 Studies beyond the initial degree among school principals in Chile

Table	Total	Municipal	Private subsidized	Paid private
% that holds an undergraduate degree[a]	69.7	89.0	56.8	65.4
% that holds a master's degree	44.2	60.6	31.8	47.9
% that holds a doctorate	4.4	5.0	3.0	8.8

Source: Generated by the authors based on the "School Leadership and the Quality of Education in Chile" Survey, CEPPE 2010
[a] This only covers participation in training programs lasting more than 1 year

principals have a degree in education. The majority (59%) have trained as basic schoolteachers (1st to 8th grade), while another 23% have a degree in secondary education (9th to 12th grade). This is not surprising given that the legislation establishes this requirement and only allows professionals from other fields to hold headship positions in exceptional cases.

What is, however, surprising is that a majority of principals have continued their studies beyond the undergraduate level. According to our survey a very high percentage of principals of urban primary schools have pursued further studies, including a large group that has earned master's degrees and even doctorates. As Table 18.5 shows, municipal school principals have higher levels of training than private school principals, due to the fact that they are older and that accessing this position in the public sector involves competition in which education credentials are always considered.

This leads us to conclude that a significant percentage, or majority, of the principals have received training that is specific to their function. The training supply has been increasing and is abundant. A 2007 Ministry of Education study reported that out of the more than 4,500 professional development programs included in the Public Professional Development Registry of the Ministry of Education, 300 were specifically directed to school principals and pedagogic heads. In addition to the effort of universities and higher education institutes to train school managers, the Ministry of Education itself has supported professional development opportunities since the mid-2000s through its Educational Leadership Program. The program offers workshops run by universities at the municipal level. By 2009, nearly 4,000 school managers (mainly from the municipal sector) had participated in such training.[26] Thus it is not surprising that the amount of time that Chilean school principals have spent on training is much higher than that of their peers in other countries of the Latin American region. For example, the country's provisions are more than double those of Argentina and Paraguay for primary school principals (UNESCO 2008).

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[26] This generous supply of training opportunities for principals and their high level of participation is mainly due to two legislative changes that have affected the Chilean school system over the past 30 years. The first is the result of the growth of private higher education, due to legislation approved in the 1980s, which has increased the offer of post-graduate courses at private higher education institutions. A second critical development was the Teaching Statute (article 65), which states that those aspiring to principal positions must have completed additional studies related to "administration, supervision, evaluation or vocational guidance."

However, there is a critical view regarding the quality and appropriateness of the training of these school leaders. While most current principals have taken specialization courses, they mainly focus on administrative issues and pay very little attention to pedagogical and curricular matters,[27] impacting negatively on their capacity to provide support to teachers (Universidad Alberto Hurtado 2008). Ministry of Education statistics show that 86% of current principals have taken educational administration courses, while only 1.5% have taken classes focused on curricular matters. The Ministry of Education itself has noted that the in-service training of principals tends to be frontal and encyclopedic; paying scant attention to the development of functional and behavioral skills that could lead to improved practical performance, particularly in regard to supporting and guiding the work of classroom teachers (Weinstein 2009).[28]

The weaknesses in the training have another origin. They tend to focus on one specific stage of a principals' career and disregard other stages. Thus, Chile has no formal initial preparation (what the OECD calls "pre-service") for school managers.[29] In practice, teachers select diploma or degree courses from a wide range directed at "school principals" in order to gain a principal's position. Other types of managers also take these courses for development and updating ("in-service"). Even more serious is the lack of a formal *induction into the position* in Chile.[30] The following OECD comparison of training opportunities in various countries (Fig. 18.4) shows this limitation in Chile:

This lack of quality, appropriateness of, and adequate opportunity for, principal training probably underlies its lack of effect on leadership practices.[31] As a result, this enormous investment of time and resources on the part of institutions (schools, school owners, the Ministry of Education) and especially of principals themselves appears to be particularly inefficient.

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[27] The "administrative" emphasis of leadership training does not contribute to building leadership practices that schools need in order to improve their effectiveness. International research suggests the importance of in situ training that is focused on the pedagogical function (OECD 2008; McKinsey and Company 2007; Darling-Hammond et al. 2007).

[28] The importance of behavioral competencies is highlighted in Majluf and Hurtado (2008) and Garay (2008).

[29] "Training for school leadership" is not an important area in teacher training. A study by the Ministry of Education (2007) states that "after reviewing 33 curricula for Teaching Primary School programs in private and public universities in Chile, we found that 20 programs included one course on educational management and 13 made no explicit mention of the topic (though it could have been included in optional courses not described in the program materials). Of the 20 programs that deal with the subject, only two offer more than one course in this area (including topics of leadership, legislation and preschool management)".

[30] There was one exception: in 2008 and 2009, the Ministry of Education asked Fundación Chile's Education Area to carry out a pilot project on induction into the school system for 180 incoming municipal school principals.

[31] In our study the time principals dedicated to training and the degree(s) earned (certificate, master's degree or document) did not correlate to leadership practices and, more generally, to the schools' educational performance.
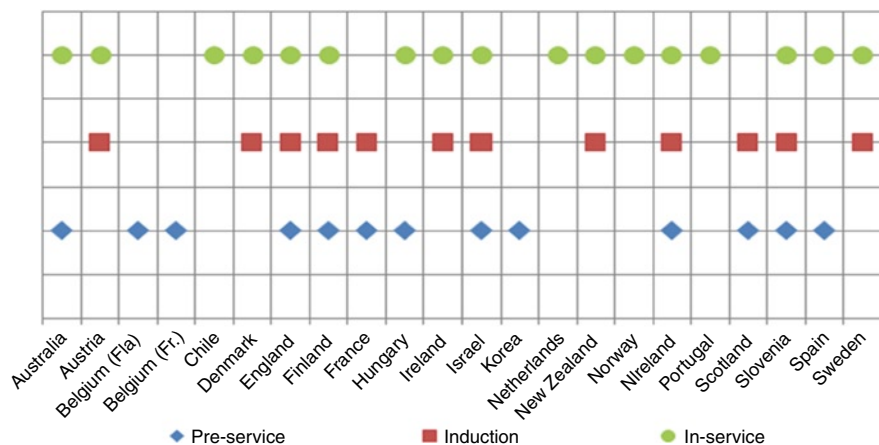
Fig. 18.4 Principal education in countries around the world (*Source*: OECD (2008))

Looking Towards the Future: Building a Policy for School Principals

School leadership in Chile is in a state of movement and tension. There is a search for ways to strengthen the contributions made by school principals, although not always with clarity or coherence. There is a general context of 20 years of educational reform that, in spite of its achievements and sustained efforts, has not managed to secure quality education for all. It has, however, produced a significant amount of pressure on the part of government and families to achieve better learning results in schools, particularly those attended by disadvantaged groups. This pressure is not indifferent as far as principals are concerned. Chile also has seen the development of legislation that clearly supports a predominantly pedagogical rather than administrative role for principals, without this being reflected in pertinent attributes, particularly in municipal schools.

The principals' profile is noteworthy because of their advanced age and extensive training, despite the significant differences between those who serve in the public sector (who tend to be male and older) and those who work in private schools. With the exception of elite establishments (paid private schools), the position of principal does not carry strong social prestige, as evident in the scant difference between their salaries and those of classroom teachers. This has made it difficult to recruit appropriate candidates thus allowing for the positions to be renewed and gain prestige.

The main strength of the practices that principals develop is the setting of future directions for the school. Their Achilles heel is instructional leadership, a decisive area to improve students' learning and yet one that receives less time and attention. This mediocrity in instructional leadership is found both in public and private schools showing that a less regulated management context, that provides more freedom to principals and school owners, is not sufficient to develop the desired leadership practices. There is a prior need to develop abilities and skills.

The interesting figure of the pedagogic head, which is supposed to work alongside the principal in the improvement of instruction, is only effective if the principal is really involved in instructional matters. That is, when the instructional leadership of the principal is not replaced by his pedagogic head but on the contrary is strengthened. School managers who carry out recognized best practices also achieve the best results, and it is also noteworthy that female principals tend to perform better than their male counterparts.

Finally, with regard to training, principals have extensive involvement in further education – diplomas, master's degrees, and even doctorates – but with an administrative orientation that is hardly *grounded* in teaching itself. The focus on in-service training has left aside the earlier pre-service and induction phases.

The dispersion of efforts to strengthen management/leadership could be more effective if there was a well-defined policy that included clear objectives, multiple sources of institutional support, and perseverance over time. Said policy should focus on the following four main approaches, which cover the problematic areas we have noted in this paper.

The first objective should be to attract and retain the best candidates. There is thus a need to significantly improve the status of principals as well as that of pedagogic heads and others with management positions, attempting to recover their symbolic importance. This should be accompanied by a substantive improvement in salaries that clearly distinguish them from classroom teachers, together with the introduction of special incentives for those who make important strides in the area of quality and particularly those who opt to hold such positions in the most at-risk schools.

Second, high quality and appropriate training should be offered to both current and future school managers, reallocating and maximizing the energy and resources that are currently assigned to these areas. The focus should be directed towards the development of pedagogical leadership, preparing them to monitor the implementation of the school's educational project and improve teachers' performance in the classroom. This implies de-emphasizing the current "administrative" focus and adopting one that is centered on the functional and behavioral abilities that are linked to instructional leadership. There is a need to ensure the quality and appropriateness of available educational opportunities including pre-service preparation and induction (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007). An effective system of principal evaluation would also allow for systematic training in the areas which evaluation showed to be the weakest.

Another priority is to change the conditions for real exercise of leadership, aligning these with the generic declarations formulated in the most recent laws. School managers, at least in the municipal sector, should be able to have decisive participation in teacher selection and evaluation, as well as having an input into the kind of professional development teachers should have access to. Accountability requires a prior step: that school managers be furnished with the attributes in respect of which they are expected to be accountable. School managers should be able to consider with their school communities which of the many programs and activities, provided by school owners and the Ministry of Education, are relevant for the improvement

of quality in their schools, and decide on their use accordingly. In terms of their own daily work, they also should have the time and energy to move beyond administrative demands and prioritize the most essential part of their jobs: working with teachers so that all of the students in the school learn.

Changing school leadership also requires a focus on networks, strengthening the work of their school with similar neighboring schools (Hopkins 2008). School owners can achieve economies of scale if they contract support staff for the management teams of their schools. More importantly, they should foster opportunities for school managers to learn from each other, exchanging knowledge, experience, and trust with their counterparts. Furthermore, they should give priority to equity, assigning their most competent principals and pedagogic heads to the most vulnerable schools.[32]

Finally, strengthening school management in the education system requires a broadening of the existing base of knowledge about its exercise in Chile. There is a need to combine qualitative and quantitative methods in order to explore the practices of principals and their teams, and to study the effect that those practices have on students' results. In the case of Chile, special attention should be paid to the figure of pedagogic head, about which a start has been made in this article, as well as the role of secondary principals. There is need for more information on the training of school leaders and its impact on their practices. Finally, it is critical that we identify the relationship between certain personal characteristics of school managers (such as their gender and age) and the type and quality of the leadership that they exercise.

In short, educational policy in Chile should accept that only school managers with strong and dedicated leadership centered on student learning will be able to break the inertia and generate dynamic actions that favor quality in every school.

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[32] Due to space limitations, this article does not expand on the functions and practices of Chile's municipal school owners, who have the final say regarding the operation and educational results of their schools. Marcel and Raczynski (2009) provide an exhaustive analysis of municipal school owners in education, showing how those that are successful allow principals to play a key role and create adequate institutional conditions for them to perform well.

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Chapter 19
School Leadership in the United Kingdom: A Policy Perspective

Jim O'Brien

Introduction

The importance of leadership for effective schools is widely acknowledged internationally in the research literature and by politicians and policymakers. National systems invariably have differing priorities and emphases, but there has been almost a global movement adhering to the view that school leadership is the critical answer to the imperative of raising standards and student achievement. The UK, where successive governments in the past two decades have sought through policy intervention to raise standards and student achievement, is no exception. However, the governance of education has changed dramatically especially since 1997 with the election of "New Labour" and their promise of devolution, and will no doubt do so again with the emergence of a Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government in May 2010 faced with an unprecedented national budget deficit. Few services will escape the substantial cuts in public services envisaged being necessary over the next few years and undoubtedly, even with promised budget protection, education and schooling will have to respond. For example, in Scotland, with a population of just over 5 million, the continuing existence of 32 local authorities each separately responsible for the education budget in that district immediately looks to be untenable and collaboration between or merger of such authorities seems probable. While this chapter focuses on UK developments, it is written from the perspective of someone who has always worked and researched in the Scottish context and many examples used will inevitably originate from there, especially given the resurgence of interest in the "distinctiveness" of Scottish education (Bryce and Humes 2008).

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The United Kingdom: The Impact of Devolution

Policy for the education system in England remains at Westminster. However, the re-establishment of Scotland's Parliament at Holyrood in Edinburgh, the setting up of a Welsh Assembly in Cardiff and the recent restoration of powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly at Stormont mean that there are now four clearly separate education systems within the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales). Formal devolved responsibility for education of powers over educational policy in the four jurisdictions has resulted in greater scope for divergence and material difference. However, an increasingly important research by-product of this development has been the enlarged scope for "home" comparative investigations (Raffe et al. 1999; Phillips 2003) into policy and structures as they evolve in each country.

Due to the political situation in Northern Ireland, British mainland political parties have traditionally not stood for election there and the province has its own school system where pluralism, community relations, equality and diversity in education policy are critical to the future of the system and currently a consultation on such matters is in place (http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/20-community-relations-pg/community_relations-consultation.htm, accessed September 2010).

Wales, where education policy and the schooling system have long been closely linked to England, especially more recently in relation to the National Curriculum, is increasingly taking on a Welsh perspective at all levels (Daugherty 2006; Egan and James 2003; National Assembly for Wales 2001; Welsh Assembly Government 2006). Education as the major devolved area provides opportunities to assert a degree of distinctiveness as Rees (2007: 8) indicates,

> When the First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, in a speech to the National Institute for Public Policy Research at the University of Wales, Swansea, in December 2002, wished to demonstrate his claim that there was "clear red water" between the policies of his administration and those of New Labour in Westminster, it was to educational initiatives that he frequently turned.

Research consideration of the impacts of parliamentary devolution in Wales on education policy is developing. As Raffe (2004) has argued in Scotland, Rees (2007) points out that parliamentary devolution has created circumstances in which Welsh education policies have become increasingly distinct from those of the other UK jurisdictions. He suggests that while the British system retains significant influence the distinctiveness of the Welsh system is characterised by the continuation of well-rooted values and social democratic policy themes that are in marked contrast to the radical developments promoted since 1997 by "New Labour" in England.

Historically, Scotland has always had its own separate and distinctive education system. Since devolution, the Scottish Executive [Government] and the Scottish Parliament have developed a series of educational initiatives including a national debate about education and its purposes (Scottish Executive Education Department [SEED] 2003), agreement on the national educational priorities for schooling, re-emphasised in *Ambitious, Excellent Schools* (SEED 2004), initiatives include the introduction of new community schools (Sammons et al. 2003), and enhanced

teacher conditions of service (SEED 2001a, b), an emphasis on professional renewal, school re-culturing and the professional learning or continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers and school leaders. While the success or otherwise of many of these initiatives has been limited or unproven to date, and is subject to political vagaries with the emergence of the Scottish National Party as the governing party in the Holyrood Parliament, they have demonstrably evidenced that things are done differently in Scotland.

The English education system continues to look to Westminster for policy and governance and devolution has resulted in the anomaly of non-English-based MPs still being able to vote on such matters. There have been muted attempts to devolve some policy responsibilities to the English regions but so far without great enthusiasm. Partially as a result of its size and historical relationship with other parts of the UK, invariably school policy priorities and initiatives in England have an influence on developments elsewhere. However, many policy proposals have been mediated even before the onset of devolution. These include, for example, Prime Minister Thatcher's attempts in the late 1980s to promote new school governing bodies in Scotland – School Boards – and the associated "opting out" of local authority control by individual schools; policies which have been abandoned in the case of School Boards, while the Scots have failed to see any merit in schools removing themselves from local authority control although recently there have been some signs that experimentation with a form of greater devolved powers to schools themselves may be gaining some support.

Influences on School Leadership Policy

Since Prime Minister Callaghan's 1976 Ruskin College speech on the need to raise the quality of schooling and to improve educational standards if the UK was to compete economically as a nation, successive governments have strived to raise standards of achievement in British schools. Day (2002, 2005) provides interesting insights into the influences on school leadership policy as he "charts the changes over the last 20 years of government policies and the effects of the new performativity agendas upon school principals" (2005: 393). While writing about leadership in England and Wales, much of his identification of pressures on the system, and how these influence the nature of school leadership, holds true in the rest of the UK although similar changes may not have been so overt or have plainly not been adopted, e.g. in Scotland collaboration between schools has continued to be a priority and the creation of a quasi-market associated with schools and raising standards has failed to take hold.

Clearly the autonomy of teachers has been eroded *inter alia* by the centrally determined establishment of stringent forms of public accountability and quality assurance of teaching through teacher appraisal and pay-related threshold arrangements, national testing of school students at key stages and the development of national *curricula* and national prescriptive policies such as the "Literacy Hour",

combined with the introduction of decentralised school-based financial management and greater powers for school governing bodies allied to increased parental choice. As Day notes in an earlier article (2002: 677) "what has happened to education is one outcome of a larger ideological debate on the costs and management of the public services in general". Day cites Whitty et al. (1998: 65), who describe this process as "a struggle among different stakeholders over the definition of teacher professionalism and professionality for the twenty first century…".

This approach initially promoted by the "New Right" has developed into the dominant discourse in schooling. In England, especially, the key to these changes is increased indirect rule from the centre and the promotion of a target culture of school development and improvement plans; clear prescription of the curriculum; acceptance of, and compliance with, teacher standards; external inspection of school standards and the publication of reports and league tables (often described as a "naming and shaming" agenda) plus control of teacher professional identity aligned to technicist or instrumental competences. Overall, such measures mean that to all intents and purposes teachers have been shorn of professionalism.

The situation in Scotland was similar but somewhat different given the nature of the relationship between Scottish schools and the State. In earlier writing (O'Brien et al. 2008: 3), it was suggested that sociological and historical research (McPherson and Raab 1988; Paterson 2000) indicates that the "relationship between state and schooling developed in Scotland alongside the adoption of universalist welfare values in school education since 1945". Such research suggests that Scotland achieved acceptance of extensive "managed" centralisation, in which much of the power and control lay hidden behind national "guidance", and/or agencies such as the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum [now Learning Teaching Scotland] and Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools – interestingly it is now proposed that these two bodies merge. Additionally, the separation of strategic policy (national government) and provision (local authorities) meant that neither local nor national government regarded itself as responsible for failures of policy or in respect of implementation of school and teacher policy. Equally, a limited, and limiting, model of teacher professionalism was unmistakable viz. teachers were viewed as employees responsible for implementing policy decided elsewhere. Despite this, the various disputes in Scotland between teachers, employers and government over national policy direction (e.g. the rejection of a form of national testing achieved by an alliance of teachers and parents) demonstrate the continuing struggle for power and control among key players in the system. Scotland, in the 1990s was not immune to "a simplistic managerialist mindset" evidenced by the then national UK government whose reforms were "aimed at transforming educational practice and designed to make the teaching profession more accountable (and, so the thinking went, schools would therefore be more effective) through greater control" (O'Brien et al. 2008: 3). The accountability agenda in Scotland at this time is illustrated by the introduction of teacher appraisal (subsequently mediated into the less intimidating staff development and review); national testing in primary schools (although, as noted previously, the original intent was defeated); strict curriculum guidance, reinforced by an external inspection system looking for

teacher compliance although it could be claimed that this was countered with the promotion of school self-evaluation (SEED 2002a, b) and opportunities for parents to become involved in school governance through School Boards (with the consequent unsuccessful opportunity to "opt out" of local authority control). However, unlike other parts of the UK, Scottish civic society (Paterson 2000) exercised greater power, underpinned by a strong civic consensus, and actively resisted the wholesale "marketisation" of public schooling. In Scotland the ideals of public schooling as a force for good remained strong. This was evinced by the teaching profession and their employers sharing the twin ideals that public schooling exists to equalise opportunity and to counter disadvantage.

Post devolution in 1999, increased funding allocations to schools especially in relation to early intervention paralleled a clear commitment to local empowerment through experimentation with "new community" or "full-service" schools (Sammons et al. 2003). The agreed national priorities in education moved beyond academic attainment into areas such as "values and citizenship" and "inclusion and equality". The implied increased emphasis on the emotional development of the whole child and less on the acquisition and progression of formal cognitive skills is given full consideration by O'Brien and MacLeod (2009). Much of this has come together with the emergence of a new curriculum – *Curriculum for Excellence* (SEED 2004) – the progress of this innovation and full details of current developments can be found online at http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/ whatiscurriculumforexcellence//. Schools and teachers are encouraged under this new curriculum to seek creative and engaging ways of educating young people to become "successful learners, confident individuals, active contributors and responsible citizens". Teachers are expected to engage collaboratively in curriculum development with much less central prescription. Such an approach is challenging for the teaching profession in Scotland and in itself puts different forms of pressure on school leaders, perhaps more so in secondary schools, as participative, active and authentic learning moves centre stage in Scottish schools.

Nevertheless, some research suggests Scotland, like other nations, remains firmly in the grip of managerialist discourse and policymaking. Reeves et al. (2006: 3) as part of the Applied Educational Research Scheme (Cowie and McKinney 2007), designed to build useful research capacity particularly in Scottish University Education Faculties, reported that having analysed recently published Scottish policy publications,

> … the documentary evidence confirmed that policy formation in school management and governance in Scotland reflects the use of "globalised" solutions to modernising public services through the adoption of managerial strategies to bring about change. This was exemplified in the recent re-structuring of the schools' work force under the terms of the McCrone Agreement (SE 2001 [see SEED 2001b]) which has been introduced alongside other centralised strategies to re-define teacher professionalism such as a framework of occupational standards for teachers…However there is also a "new" strand post-devolution, identifiable as a europeanised and globalised theme, about nation-building and the "revival" of democracy.

The researchers go on to conclude that the policy discourse stresses involvement and participation with frequent references to partnership but in their view with little demonstrable commitment to the values and aims of the rhetoric used in the policy documents.

Of course schooling in the UK was not alone in facing such accountability measures. How new managerialism emerged and developed in education internationally is considered in an analysis of changing work patterns among those involved in educational leadership (Gronn 2003).

School Leadership Policy Priorities

When New Labour was elected in 1997 the foregoing modernisation and school improvement agenda became even more pronounced in England where the new Government's White Paper, Excellence in Schools (DfEE 1997: 46) demonstrates the belief in leadership, particularly that of head teachers.

> The vision for learning set out in this White Paper will demand the highest qualities of leadership and management from headteachers. The quality of the head often makes the difference between the success or failure of a school. Good heads can transform a school; poor heads can block progress and achievement. It is essential that we have measures in place to strengthen the skills of all new and serving heads.

The White Paper was quickly followed a year later with renewed emphasis on the type of leadership required of head teachers (DfEE 1998: 22).

> All the evidence shows that heads are the key to a school's success. All schools need a leader who creates a sense of purpose and direction, sets high expectations of staff and pupils, focuses on improving teaching and learning, monitors performance and motivates the staff to give of their best. The best heads are as good at leadership as the best leaders in any other sector, including business. The challenge is to create the rewards, training and support to attract, retain and develop many more heads of this calibre.

This was reflected throughout the emerging situation within the UK where devolved governments subsequently agreed that high quality leadership drives excellent schools and that inspirational school leaders can turn around schools in difficult circumstances and make a lasting difference to the lives of generations of young people and to whole communities. Of course the concept of leadership is contested and viewed as problematic in the academic literature – this is not necessarily the case in policy documentation where often a mix of almost conflicting conceptualisations (Reeves et al. 2006) can be evident across a range of statements from government(s). So in the last decade we have witnessed an emphasis on the role of head teacher plus the emergence of "teacher leadership" and "distributed leadership" but within the UK as in other parts of the world the dominant variant is described as "transformational" and largely derived from the seminal work of Leithwood et al. (1999).

Two important research reports on school leadership in England and Wales have been commissioned by government in the past decade (Earley et al. 2002; DfES/PricewaterhouseCoopers 2007). The comprehensive research reported by Earley and his colleagues (2002: 7) indicates differing perceptions of school leadership and the head teacher role in particular:

- Head teachers, and others in leadership positions in schools, tend to think of their roles in terms of "leading with a clear vision" and "setting high expectations".

They make a distinction between "leadership" and "management" conceptually, if not always in practice.

- Teachers want to become leaders in order to "have a say" and "make a difference".
- The majority of head teachers still spend some of their working week in the classroom, either teaching, observing or coaching.
- Leaders in schools are demotivated by the bureaucracy and excessive paperwork which they associate with the role and also by "constant change" in the education system.
- Respondents were of the view that recruitment and retention of school leaders is likely to become increasingly problematic.
- Head teachers, deputy head teachers and middle managers in schools are perceived by LEA respondents and training providers to be of varying quality. There is much concern among both that middle managers are not sufficiently aware of and trained for their role as leaders.

The research also identified a number of key issues not least questions around the appeal and attractiveness of leadership roles, the building of capability as leaders, building capacity through preparation and support for school leaders, using data and ICT for leadership purposes and the emerging and now increasingly vexed issue of recruitment and retention of school leaders. The Pricewaterhouse Coopers Report (2007: v), when addressing the role and responsibilities of school leaders confirms the continuing demands being made of those with such responsibilities:

> There is a clear sense amongst school leaders that their role has become more challenging, and that the complexity and range of tasks they are required to undertake has increased greatly in recent years. This is due in large part to a number of inter-related policies and initiatives that impact on the role of school leaders including Every Child Matters (ECM), workforce remodelling, and the 14–19 agenda. Implementation of these initiatives requires a new set of skills including greater collaboration between schools, and partnership working across the children's services sector and beyond.

While being mindful of the importance of specific contextual differences, the report (section "School leadership policy priorities") also considered the benefits and pitfalls and the inherent diversity of a range of existing and emerging models of school leadership, described as traditional, managed, multi-agency, federated and system. Roles and responsibilities and the commensurate necessary skills needed by leaders were discussed and lead into consideration of the continuing issues of building capacity and succession in leadership.

Beyond government funded research, the Economic and Social Science Research Council (ESRC) recently funded a major project – *Knowledge production in educational leadership* (RES-000-23-1192) – this was a wide ranging project and important articles are now emerging from the study (Gunter and Forrester 2008, 2009). The abstract of the article by Gunter and Forrester (2009: 495) indicates that this project "focused on the first 10 years of New Labour education policy-making, with a particular emphasis on investment in school leadership as a means of delivering radical reforms". They argue that a key focus of the time was on schools and teachers perceived as failing. The role of head teachers was to turn such situations around.

The investment in head teachers was substantial not only in related salary increases for heads but in terms of the development and support opportunities provided including the establishment and significant funding afforded to the then National College for School Leadership (NCSL), later renamed The National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services. Gunter and Forrester (2009: 497) confirm the view that in England what New Labour brought about was the establishment of,

> … the *leadership of schools* as distinct from school or educational leadership. Educational leadership is based on the headteacher as qualified teacher where s/he is able to teach and has risen through the ranks to take on professional leadership. Hence the headteacher knows about teaching and learning, and can lead professional colleagues in debates and decisions about curriculum development and improvements to teaching and learning. School leadership developed rapidly from 1988 when site-based management was introduced, where the school could hire and fire staff, and where funding was based on open enrolment by students. Curriculum was taken from professionals and handed over to national agencies who determined what was to be taught. The school as a small business challenged the "teacherness" of the head and emphasised an entrepreneurial, chief executive role. New Labour accelerated the removal of curriculum and pedagogic decisions from professionals begun under the previous Thatcherite governments, and provided schools with curriculum strategies, scripts and learning resources that meant teachers had to deliver what had been determined externally and centrally, and the school as a business was controlled though outcomes measurements by national benchmarks…

This once more confirms the dominance of the concept of the "transformational leader", embodied in the head teacher, in leadership policymaking in the period being considered. In alignment with this, the PricewaterhouseCoopers Report suggests that in future the technical leadership skills required of school leaders will not necessarily include those relating to curriculum development or pedagogy, traditionally and fundamentally the realms of professionally qualified teachers. This fits neatly with the recent emphasis on children's services (O'Brien and MacLeod 2009) where a range of co-professionals can cooperate in the educational and welfare interests of children. In England, again as Gunter and Forrester observe (2009: 498),

> The person who heads up educational provision on a campus alongside other services, such as a health centre or welfare services, may have QTS, but the overall executive can come from the public, private or voluntary sector. While the New Labour rhetoric about this development is about the "new" and "modern", the reality is that the leader remains a single appointed person who is officially trained and licensed according to prescribed standards, and leadership is about localised delivery in the school or wider area (what policy-makers are calling systemic leadership).

So what is the licence to headship and how has that developed?

Policy and Provision for Leadership Preparation and Support

New forms of preparation, support and development for school leaders and managers associated with such significant changes have become necessary perhaps because of the complex, often ambiguous and multi-faceted role and expectations

now demanded of school head teachers in particular. Across the UK, the emphasis for some time has been on preparing and supporting school head teachers in tandem with the pressures on and expectations of heads. Such emphasis has been fuelled by expressions of concern not only in the UK but also in Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the USA about the downturn in applications for headship and of the potential of a crisis in the supply and retention of school principals and heads (O'Brien 2009; Rhodes and Brundrett 2005). Successive OFSTED and HMIE reports suggest that 20% of heads are not up to the job plus anecdotal evidence of the declining quality of those who do apply abound. How this has been addressed can be illustrated with what has occurred in Scotland over the period.

Standards-Based Development

Sutherland (1997), in his report on teacher education and training, had indicated the need for more coherence in the arrangements for the CPD of teachers. Similar to developments in England and Wales, in Scotland a national CPD framework (Purdon 2003; Christie and O'Brien 2005; O'Brien 2007) to include teacher probation and induction, and the range, types and levels of CPD undertaken by teachers was envisaged, and since 1998 such a framework has emerged albeit in a piecemeal fashion.

This framework (Table 19.1) is standards based. A major difference within the UK is that when closely examined and compared with English standards the Scottish standards appear to be less "technicist" and based on an agreed acceptance of the importance of professional values and a broader view of education and the professional role of teachers and school leaders.

While the professional and remuneration effects for teachers of the post-McCrone teacher settlement (SEED 2001a, b) are significant, there were other important implications – management within Scottish schools was to be "flattened" because the agreement included changes in the structure and management of schools, with moves to a reduced hierarchy, more participative management, an emphasis on collegiality (MacDonald 2004) and enhancement of the professional autonomy of attested experienced teachers. There were important implications for teacher career structures and for the future "pool" of aspirant principals

Table 19.1 The Scottish professional development framework for teachers

Career stage	Programme/qualification	Associated standard
Pre-service	Initial teacher education	The Standard for ITE in Scotland
Initial induction year	Teacher induction scheme	The Standard for Full Registration
Established teacher (after 5 years)	Chartered Teacher Programme leading to Chartered Teacher Status	Standard for Chartered Teacher
Senior management	Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) flexible routes to headship	The Standard for Headship

or head teachers, especially with the suggestion that there should be a national programme for Chartered Teacher (CT) status with commensurate financial rewards (O'Brien and Hunt 2005).

The Standard for Headship and the SQH

School management had been stressed until recent times in Scotland (O'Brien et al. 2008) and the training provided during the early 1990s illustrates that. Given the developing importance afforded to school leadership, emphasised regularly in HMIe reports for example, the government funded the development of a Standard for Headship (S*f*H) with subsequent revisions (SEED 2002a, b, 2005a, b). An associated programme of professional development was introduced to allow candidates with management experience to satisfy the S*f*H prior to their application for appointment as head teachers. This post-graduate award and professional qualification – the Scottish Qualification for Headship [SQH] – was designed to develop and improve candidates' practice as school leaders and managers and involves not only attending courses and workshops but also a large element of work-based learning (Reeves et al. 2002).

While there is a parallel qualification available in Northern Ireland, Wales and England, managed by the NCSL, viz. the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) (Watkin 2000; Estyn 2010), the difference in Scotland is that SQH programmes were originally offered by three *consortia* of local authorities (Murphy et al. 2002), the employers, in partnership with approved universities; with the academic content being validated by a university while GTCS accredited the professional content and endorsed the work-based learning model adopted. The programmes are rigorous (Cowie 2005) and are considered highly developmental from a theoretical and practical perspective. Despite existing SQH programmes being positively evaluated by an independent national evaluation (Menter et al. 2003), the number of people coming forward nationally with employer support to benefit from SQH provision suggested that the programme would not produce enough qualified people, i.e. those who have met the S*f*H to meet the possible shortage of applicants for headship. Recent research (MacBeath et al. 2009; O'Brien 2009) suggests this is a genuine concern partly because of the reluctance of deputy heads to consider a move upwards. The Scottish Qualification for Headship is a huge valuable development experience for many aspirant head teachers (O'Brien and Torrance 2005), nevertheless the Scottish government recognised the need to have in place alternative forms of preparation for headship, which met different personal and professional needs and encouraged all those with the potential to undertake the post of head teacher, to pursue the S*f*H.

For that reason, government developed proposals for additional ways of meeting the *SfH*. This informed the national Leadership Group that was established to consider the possibility of a Leadership Academy, perhaps similar to NCSL although the economics of such a proposal perhaps led to this swiftly becoming a *Leadership Agenda*.

The overall intention of this Leadership Group was to create opportunities which maximised flexibility, increased mentoring and coaching capacity, establishing additional support and development mechanisms for head teachers who are new in post and enabled potential head teachers to identify their own needs and pursue their own, personalised development pathways.

Perhaps the most controversial work of the Leadership Group was associated with the consultation (SEED 2006) setting out proposals for more flexible approaches to achieving the S*f*H. The consultation responses queried the evidence base for the need for such alternative routes, questioned the reliance on coaching given the current capacities at local authority and school level and lack of any protected time for this activity and endorsed the involvement of higher education and existing partnerships and stressed the need for continuing national rigorous assessment procedures. Despite such reservations, a programme was established to pilot and to test some flexible approaches to meeting the S*f*H. The pilot programme which emerged relied heavily on a coaching and mentoring model (Gronn et al. 2008) and this approach is now gathering momentum while the SQH looks likely to decline.

Supporting School Leadership

Akin to programmes developed in the NCSL in England such as "Leading from the Middle", Scotland has had an emphasis on preparing school leaders to achieve the *SfH* but has also developed provision for various perceived stages of school management and leadership (SEED 2003; O'Brien and Torrance 2005) such as project management. A framework for leadership development has also been produced mirroring similar approaches in England and in Wales (Table 19.2).

Several initiatives have emerged to attempt to build capacity and to promote the possibilities of coaching and mentoring including inviting international "thought leaders" in such areas to International Summer Schools in Scotland. NCSL in its way too introduced international thinking to English school leaders through conferences and seminars but also its comprehensive research and publication output. From April 2006, Scottish Local Authorities were encouraged to put forward proposals to participate in a coaching and mentoring project. The principle behind the initiative was to build coaching and mentoring capacity. Not all projects were related to leadership and management, several were concerned with mentoring beginner teachers and some with coaching school students, but many authorities

Table 19.2 The Scottish professional development framework for school leaders

Project leadership	Time limited, small-scale projects for teachers early in their careers
Team leadership	Regular leadership of working groups or of established teams of staff
School leadership	including Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH)
Strategic leadership	Leadership (for those with overall responsibility for a school or engaged in leading major initiatives at a local or national level)

took the opportunity to access funding for leadership-related development, mainly in relation to the induction of new head teachers; existing head teachers are viewed as potential coaches, and it will be interesting to see what emerges over time from such developments. Prior to this there was little evidence in Scotland of successful coaching and mentoring other than in relation to beginner teachers in their induction year and even that is regarded as problematic, uneven and patchy (O'Brien and Christie 2005).

Conclusion

Much of the recent activity related to policy in school leadership and management is summarised in publications from the OECD activity, *Improving School Leadership*. For the first time two background reports for the UK were produced, another indication of the devolved changes, one English (Higham et al. 2007) the other from Scotland (SEED 2007). Genuine challenges exist across the jurisdictions within the UK. Given the demands and expectations placed on them, those in leadership positions need to have access to a wide range of resources, skills and abilities. School leaders need to apply these both strategically, in terms of the long-term direction of the school, and operationally in the complex situations, and the interactions with individuals, which occur within school communities. School leaders must use cognitive resources, which allow them to understand and interpret pedagogical practice and democratic social process. They will need affective interpersonal resources, which support their emotional work with and for others. They will need access to the spiritual and moral resources that allow them to explore with others in their school communities the values and purposes of education, issues of social justice and the ethics of the school community. Such cognitive, affective and moral resources, informed by experience and situational knowledge, offer the best guarantees of good judgement in dealing with the tensions and dilemmas of schooling. It is not just head teachers, and others in positions of authority within and external to schools, who are called to develop these resources, but all who share in leadership activity. This is the challenge for the future to move beyond reliance on the head teacher and to promote, seek and utilise leadership capacity where it is needed.

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Part IV
Educating School Leaders
for Leadership for Learning

Chapter 20
Lessons About Improving Leadership on a Large Scale: From Ontario's Leadership Strategy*

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Introduction

Leadership is widely believed to be a critical part of any successful large-scale reform initiative. As a consequence, leadership development has become a preoccupation of policy makers and reformers, as well as a growth industry in its own right. However, most research aimed at improving knowledge about effective leadership development processes has focused on relatively small programs, often those based in universities (e.g., Levine 2005), and programs aligned loosely, at best, with the larger reform efforts in their environments (e.g., Darling-Hammond et al. 2007).

This chapter inquires about the challenges faced by policy makers and their staffs intending to improve the quality of school and district leadership as a key part of their overall efforts to improve student achievement and well-being. What does it take to improve leadership on a large scale? More specifically, how can provincial, state, or national initiatives be designed to accomplish such a goal? These are the primary questions addressed in this chapter, the main response to which is eight lessons about large-scale leadership development intended for policy makers and their staffs. This chapter complements Chap. 34 by Pedwell et al. that describes the origins, developments, and main components of education leadership development in Ontario. This chapter also provides a description of the Ontario education system which is background to this discussion as well.

Provincial Leadership Initiatives

Evidence to begin answering these questions was collected in the context of the Ontario government's 6-year comprehensive and relatively successful strategy to improve student learning and increase student retention rates, among other outcomes (e.g., Levin 2008; Fullan and Levin 2009). Many groups within the government had a stake in fostering more effective school and district leadership aligned to their initiatives (e.g., The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat) but primary responsibility was assigned to a newly formed Leadership Development Branch (LDB). For the past 4 years, this 19-member branch, sometimes in collaboration with other ministry groups, has designed and implemented 13 initiatives aimed at further enhancing the quality of school and district leadership throughout the province.

Consistent with a government-wide commitment to be "evidence informed," the design of each initiative was shaped, to a significant degree, by a careful review of relevant evidence; a wide array of evidence has been collected about most of these initiatives including reasons for variation in the extent to which they have accomplished their goals. There is considerable variation in both the amount and types of evidence collected about each of these initiatives, however. To illustrate the range of initiatives taken and the types of data collected, six of them are summarized here. For each initiative, we identify which large-scale reform challenges each of these initiatives seems to have addressed and the conceptual foundations underlying its theory of action. We also offer a brief description of what we know about the impact of each initiative.

Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF): *Creating the Vision*

One of the first initiatives of the LDB, the *Ontario Leadership Framework*, contributed to the province's large-scale reform efforts by:

- Providing an account of successful practices that clarified what those in leadership roles should do without trivializing the complexity of the challenges they faced (Louis et al. 2010);
- Creating a robust foundation on which to base other provincial and district leadership development initiatives;
- Making explicit connections between leaders' influence and the quality of teaching and learning in schools and classrooms (City et al. 2009).

The OLF includes a set of core leadership practices and competencies – skills, knowledge, and attitudes – for principals, vice-principals, and supervisory officers. It is the province's vision of successful leadership. Early drafts of the framework were developed from a synthesis of empirical evidence about successful leadership practices across many different contexts but especially schools and districts (e.g., Leithwood and Jantzi 2006). This initial draft was then tested, revised, and elaborated in response to the suggestions of a wide array of Ontario practitioners collected

through an extensive consultation process across the province. The *Institute for Education Leadership* (described below) then assumed the lead in promoting the *OLF* through professional learning sessions involving many school systems across the province.

The ministry and many districts are now using the framework as a foundation for their leadership development efforts. For example, the ministry used the *OLF* to underpin development of its mentoring initiative (described below) for school and system leaders. Leadership capacities described in the *OLF* are also being used as the basis for principal/vice-principal selection and evaluation processes. Districts are using the OLF to help develop, monitor, and revise both district and school improvement plans, as well as to help focus learning opportunities for school and district leaders.

Because they were considered key to making progress on the province's current educational goals, the LDB and other key ministry groups selected five of OLF's core leadership capacities for special attention. In the fall of 2009, the ministry committed to embed these core capacities (understanding how to work with data, goal setting, collaboration and teamwork, providing feedback, and linking resources to priorities) in virtually all ministry initiatives aimed at improving teaching and learning.

Institute for Education Leadership (IEL): *Distributing the Ownership*

Establishment of the *Institute for Educational Leadership* in 2006 provided at least a partial antidote to four predictable problems faced by governments launching large-scale reform initiatives:

- How to engage leaders at multiple levels of the province's schools (referred to in the province as "tri-level" leadership) in collaborative deliberations about how to foster leadership development across the province;
- How to supplement the inevitably limited capacities of staff within government departments to address the full range of needs and demands of those intended to implement the initiative (Louis et al. 2010);
- How to surface and deal constructively with dissent and gain active support for the initiatives from stakeholder representatives with significant influence on the motivations and dispositions of those whom they represent (Doyle and Pimmentel 1993; McLaughlin 1987);
- How to significantly enlarge the capacities and energies required to extend, adapt, and refine the reform initiatives, as they are implemented, in response to the challenges that can never be anticipated in advance but must be adequately addressed for the reform to be successful.

In response to these and other problems, the nature of the work IEL has undertaken to date, and the way that work has been carried out, reflect concepts at the heart of "social network theory" (e.g., Kilduff and Krackhardt 2008). From this perspective, IEL serves as a "hub" allowing for more complex connections among the organizations represented by its members. Acting as "nodes" in the network

increases the potential these organizations have to more fully communicate their interests to those in other nodes and to more easily form alliances around common interests. The IEL hub also provides a space within which the distributed intelligence of its members can be identified, managed, and applied to problems associated with improving leadership in the pursuit of shared purposes.

IEL's explicit goals are to define and support leadership development at all levels; foster the use of research to build leadership capacity; facilitate alignment among leaders at the provincial, district, and school levels; and encourage communication about leadership issues across nine member associations. IEL's board includes most presidents and executive directors of all of the provinces' principal and district leaders' professional associations, as well as members of several ministry branches including the LDB. All IEL members serve as volunteers and the organization has no full-time paid staff.

Using a $4 million budget provided by the ministry in 2006, IEL has, for example, sponsored a small number of applied research projects in the province. It has also worked with ministry staff to develop the OLF and advocated for its understanding and use throughout the province. One of IEL's 2008–2009 strategies for accomplishing this was the provision of a professional development program for school and district leaders in which key representatives from 70 of the 72 school systems in the province participated. Follow-up telephone surveys for another IEL initiative (mentoring new leaders) indicated that the *OLF* was being used for several purposes: to match mentees and mentors based on identified areas of need and strengths, to guide conversations help develop individual professional learning plans, and to build capacity for both the mentees and mentors. This and other evidence collected by IEL point to a substantial increase in demand for the *OLF* and assistance in its application.

Evidence about the impact of specific *IEL* initiatives varies from anecdotal to quite systematic. As a response to the three broad challenges set out for it, as shown above, however, all stakeholder groups included in the *IEL* board have contributed their own groups' resources, when useful, to assist the province's reform initiative as it bears on leadership, their support is widely visible and vocal to their members, and they are heavily engaged in attempts to address the ongoing issues that arise in developing reform-related leadership across the province.

Principal Performance Appraisal (PPA): *Embedding the Vision*

The development, piloting, and implementation of the PPA model at least partially addressed three closely related challenges associated with the province's large-scale reform effort:

- How to reduce the incidence of ineffective leadership practices across schools;
- How to more closely connect the work of principals and vice-principals to the goals of the ministry and districts while supporting their professional growth; and
- How to help ensure that the considerable resources typically spent on principal appraisal made a greater contribution to student learning.

Prior to the development and implementation of this model there was no province-wide performance appraisal system for principals. Appraisals were done inconsistently across the province with the result that some principals and vice-principals were not appraised on their performance at all and others were appraised against measures unrelated to evidence about effective leadership practice. As the *OLF* contends, successful leaders enact the same repertoire of basic leadership practices,[1] although they enact them differently depending on context.

Evidence points to a positive relationship between approaches to principal evaluation based on both professional growth and accountability, with principals setting ambitious goals for student learning and supporting instructional quality.[2] *PPA* is consistent with this evidence; it is both a goal-based and growth-oriented model. It requires appraisees to develop a small set of challenging, yet achievable goals (drawing on provincial, district, and local priorities), to design strategies for implementation and then to identify indicators of success. The summative appraisal of the principal's performance is focused on the actual consequences of implementing the strategies; *PPA* takes into account, as well, the methods used to achieve goals, the challenges encountered, and the efforts to overcome those challenges. In collaboration with supervisors, appraisees review the leadership competencies from the *OLF* used and needed to achieve the goals, while the appraisee identifies, in his or her growth plan, the competencies to be addressed in his or her future professional learning.

Principal Congress: Mobilizing What Is Known

Among the many challenges facing large-scale reform efforts which depend for their success on effective school leadership, the *Principal Congress*, launched in 2007 as the current government moved into its second term, became a strategy for:

- Helping individual school leaders identify existing capacities likely to be useful to them in successfully implementing the large-scale reform initiatives;
- Improving utilization of the system's collective leadership knowledge to better accomplish reform goals; and
- Increasing the sensitivity of policy makers and their staffs to the challenges encountered by those expected to implement their initiatives,

The design, conduct, and eventual follow-up to the *Principal Congress* most obviously reflect evidence about what is needed to help individuals and groups make explicit the large amounts of tacit knowledge (Wagner and Carter 1996) that they typically acquire in the course of their normal practice (e.g., Norris 1985). The practical but tacit know-how possessed by school leaders who are especially

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[1] Leithwood et al. (2006).
[2] Sun and Youngs (2009).

expert at their jobs is of considerable potential value to large-scale reform efforts. But expert school leaders access knowledge to guide much of what they do in an unthinking or "automatic" fashion (Leithwood and Steinbach 1995). Such automaticity allows expert leaders to work in a highly efficient, as well as effective, manner but reduces their conscious access to the cognitive roots of their own behavior. While automaticity is functional for individual experts, therefore, it is an obstacle to the sharing of that knowledge with others.

The 2009 *Principal Congress* was a significant knowledge mobilization strategy, making expert leaders' knowledge explicit[3] and capturing the collective insights embedded in that expert knowledge. Based on recommendations from their superintendents, partly informed by provincial achievement results, close to 200 highly regarded principals and a small number of district leaders were invited to the first *Principal Congress* in February of 2009. Participants were asked in advance to answer specific questions about their own leadership practice so that they would do some thinking, reflecting, and writing about it ahead of time. These responses were coded, analyzed, and compared with relevant evidence from other research and reported[4] so that the results could be made widely available as a source of insight to other leaders in the province.

This starting point was advanced at the second *Principal Congress* (February 2010) by asking participants to unpack and describe their theories of action in response to the more challenging aspect of the gap-closing problem, a request that demands more causal thinking on their part than the questions posed in advance of the 2009 *Principal Congress*.

Mentoring New School and District Leaders: *Differentiating the Support*

The mentoring initiative for newly appointed school and district leaders was implemented in response to several leadership development and recruitment challenges faced by the province's large-scale reform efforts including:

- How to fill school and district leadership roles with highly skilled and motivated people in the face of projected demographic shortages (Canadian Association of Principals 1999);
- How to attract future leaders to the role in the face of widespread concerns about the daunting demands they are likely to confront (e.g., time demands, accountability demands) (Institute for Education Leadership 2008); and
- How to support the development of leaders with a relentless focus on teaching and learning (Leithwood et al. 2010) while still fulfilling their administrative duties.

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[3]This was knowledge about how to close the gap in achievement between successful students and those who are at risk of failure.

[4]See Leithwood (2009).

A wide range of benefits from mentoring have been reported for newly appointed administrators, for those serving as mentors, and for the organization itself (e.g., Bloom et al. 2005; Hobson 2003; Zachary 2005). Mentees report such benefits as increased confidence and self-esteem, improved technical expertise/problem analysis, and increased professional growth in leadership skill and understanding (Hobson 2003). High-quality mentorship also supports new principals in being vision driven and instructionally focused, instead of problem driven and management focused (The Wallace Foundation 2007).

Initially involving 20 districts and the three principal associations in pilot work, the implementation of mentoring for newly appointed school and system leaders proceeded in planned stages allowing for adjustments in light of growing experience. Terms of the project allowed newly appointed school and district leaders to receive mentoring support in their first 2 years in the role. Experienced leaders received support and resources to become mentors and continue developing their own leadership practice.

In June 2008, mentoring for newly appointed school leaders was introduced across the province. Boards were eligible to receive funding for all newly appointed principals and vice-principals in their first 2 years in the role. At the same time, mentoring for newly appointed district leaders was field tested in collaboration with the provincial superintendents' associations.[5]

Results, to date, of external (and ongoing) evaluations of the mentoring initiative, demonstrate significant benefits for both mentees and mentors. For mentees, such benefits include the development of a better understanding of their role, an increase in their confidence, improved leadership knowledge and practice, and expanded opportunities for reflection. Mentors reported greater awareness of alternative approaches to leadership and increased reflection on their own practice. In the case of district leaders, mentoring also helped mentees to develop their unique leadership styles, visions, and agenda for the role. In the longer term, participants anticipated improvements in the quality of instructional leadership across their districts and additional members in the pool of aspiring leaders.

Leading Student Achievement: Our Principal Purpose (LSA): *Getting the Rubber on the Road*

The ministry's *Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat* initiated and continues to oversee and fund this project. While it was established prior to the OLS, it was subsumed under the OLS strategy and it represents one of the most visible efforts

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[5]Ontario school system CEOs are called directors. Senior administrators reporting directly to directors are called superintendents. There are three professional associations for these superintendents in the province – one each for those working in the public, Catholic, and franco-phone systems.

in the province to realize many of the OLS' goals, so LBD staff has become increasingly engaged with it. The central contribution of principals to the success of virtually all school improvement efforts (Leithwood et al. 2004) creates three challenges for large-scale reform initiatives addressed by the *Leading Student Achievement* project:

- How to facilitate principals' understandings of the relationship between what they believe are the needs and priorities of their own schools and the purposes to be served by the large-scale reform;
- How to build principals' commitments to implementing significant features of the large-scale reform in their own schools; and
- How to develop the capacities principals need if they are to be successful in those implementation efforts.

LSA's response to these problems reflects constructivist conceptions of learning (Bransford et al. 2000), the importance of developing leaders' capacities in the situations in which they are to be used (Lave 1997), and the socially interdependent nature of much meaningful learning (Johnson and Johnson 2009).

Now in the midst of its fifth year, this project has been sponsored and overseen by the ministry and managed by the province's three principal associations. It now includes approximately 1,200 elementary principals and a recently added, much smaller, cadre of 12 secondary principals. These school leaders are provided with a series of both centrally-offered and locally-initiated professional development experiences, some face-to-face and some web-based. Experiences such as these aim to increase participants' capacities to exercise a carefully specified set of instructional leadership practices in their schools, with improved student literacy and numeracy as the desired outcome.

An extensive array of both qualitative and quantitative data has been collected from these school leaders, their teachers, and their students three times a year since the project began. These data trace changes in key school and classroom learning conditions, assess the impact of project experiences on the capacities of principals and their teachers, and estimate changes in student achievement across project schools.

While the direct impact of the LSA project on student achievement is difficult to assess, evaluation evidence points to impressive success in addressing at least two of the three challenges for which it was designed. A very high proportion of principal participants now see no difference between the priorities of their own schools and the basic aims of the province's large-scale reform initiatives. Most participants, furthermore, express strong commitments to furthering the reform effort in their own schools and districts.

The extent to which the project has increased the instructional leadership capacities of its participants is less clear. Teachers report relatively high levels of instructional leadership in their schools but these levels have not changed much from year to year. In contrast, however, principals report significant gains in their leadership capacities and believe their LSA experiences are among the most powerful sources available to them for their own professional development.

Methods

A three-stage method was used to collect and analyze evidence for this study. The first stage consisted of a detailed and comprehensive scan of data available about all 15 of the LBD initiatives. Our intention at this stage was to be as clear as the evidence would allow about the relative success of each initiative in accomplishing its own goals and how each initiative had been implemented. Table 20.1 summarizes the evidence available about the six initiatives selected for illustrative purposes in this chapter. Across the six initiatives, evidence ranged from very extensive and multiyear (e.g., LSA project) to informal and impressionistic (e.g., IEL) but still relatively extensive. Three of the six projects had been the object of formal third party evaluations (mentoring, LSA and PPA).

At the second stage of the study, each LDB team responsible for an initiative was asked to identify insights from its efforts that should inform its own future work and might be of value to others. These initiative-specific insights, at the third stage, were analyzed for broader lessons about how the branch, and groups in other educational systems, might improve their future chances of success.

This multistaged method produced eight lessons for large-scale leadership development. The next section of the chapter identifies these lessons and describes several examples of branch initiatives which are the sources of each lesson.

Results: Eight Lessons About Large-Scale Leadership Development Strategies

Insights from the evidence provided by the data scan described above resulted in eight lessons about large-scale leadership development. In this section, we identify each of these lessons and point to examples of LDB projects from which these lessons were derived. While the lessons are justified in this chapter primarily with references to the six illustrative initiatives described above, other initiatives are also noted as sources for the lesson.

Lesson 1

To have the potential for significant influence on student learning, the leadership development strategy must be intentionally and obviously aligned with the more comprehensive educational reform goals and initiatives in its environment.

The *Leading Student Achievement* project was one important source of evidence and insight giving rise to this lesson. From the outset, for example, those supporting and steering the project were quite clear that its long-term goal was the same as the main goal of the province's overall reform effort – to significantly improve

Table 20.1 Evidence available for the six illustrative LBD initiatives

LBD initiative	Sources of evidence	Nature of evidence	Data collection
OLF	Principals, vice-principals, supervisory officers, directors, ministry staff, Minister's Principal Reference Group	Focus groups Observations Testimonials	Feedback forms from participants in OLF workshops; summary of input from focus groups
LSA	Teachers Principals Superintendents Students	Surveys Surveys Phone interviews Phone interviews Achievement tests	Formal third party evaluation Fall/Spring online Fall/Spring paper and pencil Random sample of those in project Provincial administration
IEL	IEL partners (from leader associations), school and system leaders across province, ministry staff	Informal feedback [People have various opinions on the IEL based on not much information] Observations [we notice how leader groups are behaving in more collaborative ways with each other], written surveys [the surveys are about specific conferences/workshops that the IEL runs]	Summary of feedback forms from participants in IEL workshops
PC	Principals who attended the congress; ministry staff who facilitated activities at congress	Questionnaires with open-ended responses; written surveys	Preconference questions posed to all participants; feedback forms from participants
PPA	Principals, vice-principals, supervisory officers, board leads; Minister's Principal Reference Group	Interviews, focus groups, online surveys, telephone surveys, formal consultation with workgroup made up of representatives of leader associations	Formal third party evaluation of field test; survey of leads in all boards, summary of feedback from focus groups and workgroup
Mentoring	Principals, vice-principals, supervisory officers, board leads; Minister's Principal Reference Group	Interviews, focus groups, online surveys, telephone surveys	Formal third party evaluation of pilot; survey of leads in all boards; survey of mentors and mentees

students' literacy and mathematics achievement. This was the goal for which principals felt most pressure from external accountability sources and *LSA* aimed to arm them with the capacities they needed to achieve it. Such alignment of project and provincial goals is the best explanation for the huge number of principals who have joined the project by this time, more than 1,200.

Lesson 2

> *The strategy should serve both first- and second-order purposes. Increased leadership capacity is the first-order purpose. Generating rich evidence about the strengths, weaknesses, and impacts of the larger reform design is the second-order purpose.*

The *Principal Congress* was an important source of insight giving rise to this lesson. While the immediate purpose for the Congress was to build principals' capacities for improving the performance of underperforming students (closing the achievement gap), feedback from the more than 200 principals attending the conference surfaced many challenges they faced in working toward this goal in their schools. Some of these challenges had not been anticipated by those designing the provincial reform strategy while others had not been considered as significant as principals believed them to be. This feedback led to deliberations among those centrally responsible for the reform effort (e.g., assistant deputy ministers) about how useful their own initiatives were likely to be and what else they might do to support principals gap-closing work.

Lesson 3

> *The strategy should aim to increase the capacities of practicing leaders to better address not only the current set of reform goals and initiatives but as yet unforeseen future goals and initiatives, as well.*

Many of the LDB initiatives acted in accord with, and provided further reinforcement for, this lesson. For example, the *OLF* was initially based on a strong corpus of empirical evidence about leadership practices exercised by most successful leaders in many different contexts and in pursuit of many different organizational purposes. While initial arguments for their use were justified as useful guidance for responding to the province's large-scale reform priorities at the time (meeting provincially established literacy and numeracy targets), within only a few years the province's reform priorities were extended to include, for example, significantly reducing secondary school dropout rates. Had the *OLF* included only leadership practices useful in helping meet literacy and numeracy targets, it would now be of little help in guiding leaders' responses to these more recent priorities.

Lesson 4

The strategy should acknowledge authentically different challenges faced by those in different leadership roles and contexts in both its content and design.

An important reflection of this lesson is to be found in the Leadership Branch's *Mentoring of New school and District Leaders.* This initiative aimed not simply to support new leaders' entry into roles that were central to the province's large-scale reform effort, it also made room for that support to be differentiated in response to unique or especially challenging aspects of the new leaders' context.

There is a growing body of evidence pointing to the need for the specific enactments of leadership practices to be responsive to such organizational conditions as the diversity of a school's student population (Hallinger et al. 1990), the level of schooling – whether elementary or secondary (Louis et al. 2010), school size (Leithwood and Jantzi 2006), and staffs' experiences of previous leadership successions (Mascall and Leithwood 2010). Current levels of student performance within a school or district also help determine approaches to leadership likely to be most successful (Day et al. 2009).

Another project giving rise to this lesson, Principal/Vice Principal Terms and Conditions, advanced in response to specific challenges faced by principals and vice-principals. The ministry facilitated meetings with all leader associations between fall 2008 and spring 2009 to develop an effective practices guide on principal/vice-principal terms and conditions of employment. Terms and conditions outlined in the guide, which reflect effective practices, are essential to support the goal of the OLS to attract and retain the right people in the role.

Lesson 5

The strategy should consist of a small number of powerful initiatives worth pursuing over a significant period of time informed by ongoing formative data.

The OLF received considerable positive attention when initially introduced to the province and the *PPA* model helps to embed the standards into the operating procedures of implementing districts. In addition, the *OLF* is increasingly being used to help better identify approaches to leadership most helpful in the *Leading Student Achievement* project.

While the comprehensive nature of the *OLF* is a major strength in the context of both the *PPA* and *LSA*, in other contexts it has proven to be a liability. Good leadership at the district and school levels is now recognized by most other branches of the ministry as a key condition for successfully implementing their key priorities. But the *OLF* has seemed an unmanageable tool or reference point for helping those other branches clarify the leadership capacities needed to implement such priorities.

As part of evaluating the pilot work undertaken to develop both the *Mentoring* and *PPA* projects, five "core capacities," among the much larger set included in the *OLF*, emerged as both weak in terms of their practice among many leaders in the province, and especially relevant to their success (setting goals, aligning resources with priorities, promoting collaborative learning cultures, using data, and engaging in courageous conversations). In response to this formative evidence, LDB is now promoting attention especially to these capacities as the current focus for leadership development within other branches of the ministry, as well as in districts and schools. Responses to this narrowing or prioritizing of attention within the *OLF* have significantly broadened the uses being made of the *OLF* tool.

Lesson 6

> Those intended to benefit from the strategy should have significant participation in its design and ongoing development. They have a critical stake in the value of the strategies and should have opportunities to ensure that the strategies contribute to their own development.

The governing board of the *Institute for Educational Leadership*, including representatives from all the professional groups in the province with a stake in the government's reform agenda, now exercises considerable influence on both implementing and refining those features of the agenda that impact on their work. This influence goes some distance toward avoiding initiatives which would run into fatal resistance and legitimating others likely to stand a reasonable chance of success.

In addition, the ministry provided a voice to principals and vice-principals in two key initiatives, namely, the minister's Principal Reference Group and the Leader-to-Leader. The reference group consisted of 20 practicing principals and vice-principals from across the province. This consultative body provided insight, feedback, advice, and recommendation on a number of policy and program initiatives under development at the ministry. The Leader-to-Leader initiative engaged principals of 22 schools, each experiencing similar challenges to improving student achievement, in dialogue with the premier and the ministry. It focused on sharing effective practices and strategies through networks of participating schools in order to improve student achievement and well-being.

Lesson 7

> There are no reliably effective models for how to do this work, so expect to have to learn your way forward with those you intend to serve. The initial design of the strategy should be strongly influenced by evidence from previous research about what works and how. Thereafter, it should be closely monitored, adapted in response to the evidence, and remain dynamic indefinitely.

Prior to one LBD initiative not described above, the *Leadership Implementation Team (LIT)*, there was limited take-up of the LBD's work by other branches of the ministry and without their support the strategy had less impact than anticipated. While stakeholders had embraced the OLF, other branches in the ministry were slow to engage with it. The *LIT* was created to do the adaptive work of marshalling different branches of the ministry to provide a cohesive front for stakeholders about how to build leadership capacity. While other branches were engaged in leadership activities as part of the implementation of their own initiatives, this was a jagged front. A common understanding of the research base, such as that which informed the development of the *OLF* was compelling. Agreements reached among assistant deputy ministers at the *LIT* meetings were tabled and communicated across the ministry with clear expectations about how these would be carried out within initiatives led by other branches. Once the LIT agreed upon the Five Core Leadership Capacities, which were derived from the *OLF*, for example, momentum began to build.

There were, however, continued requests from branches for help in applying this to their work. In response, the LDB took two actions: one, a cross-branch CLC committee was formed to explore these applications together in a collaborative learning environment; two, LDB developed a "research to policy to practice" bulletin called *Ideas into Action* which explicitly outlined the evidence base for the CLCs and the practical applications of their use, and invited response from ministry staff and practitioners. Without these deliberate coalition-building efforts, the strategy might well have been stalled.

Lesson 8

Expect that you will need to reframe your overall strategy as your political contexts change. The quality and comprehensiveness of your evidence will be among the most powerful tools available to you for moderating politically changing environments. However, what counts as evidence is unlikely to be the same for all of your stakeholders. Clarify, in advance of collecting your evidence, what counts for each group of stakeholders to whom you consider yourself accountable.

LDB staff has yet to confront a change in government and the implications that could have for their work. But there has been a remarkable succession of Deputy Ministers of Education in the 6 years since the branch was established (five – one of whom served in that role twice). Maintaining a consistent direction during these changes in senior civil servants, as well as possible future changes in political parties, has been addressed by LBD by being as evidence based as possible and by engaging the support of as many stakeholders as possible. The nature of the evidence collected by LBD is evident in our descriptions of each initiative (above) and the *IEL* is a significant example of efforts to gain the support of influential stakeholders.

Conclusion: A "Synergistic Effects" Approach to Large-Scale Leadership Development

This chapter has proposed eight lessons for the attention of those aiming to develop both school and district leadership on a large scale. Culled from evidence which has emerged as Ontario's LDB pursued its mandate, these lessons reflect a different approach to large-scale leadership development than is evident in some of the best known examples of such development at the present time. Our chapter exemplifies a "synergistic effects" approach, one which recognizes the many different sources of influence on school and classroom conditions responsible for student learning that lie outside the control of even the most skilled local leaders. It is quite different than the more common "direct effects" approach to leadership development.

The "poster child" for large-scale, "direct effects" approaches to leadership development in the world today is undoubtedly to be found in England's *National College for Leaders of School and Children's Services.* Other jurisdictions are now also beginning to scale up their leadership development efforts. For example, the Australian state of Victoria has now created the *Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership* to develop and implement an impressively large number of professional development modules for school leaders. The primary assumption which appears to underlie the approach to leadership development in both of these cases is that focusing solely on improving the capacities of individual leaders and groups of leaders will somehow lead to widespread improvements in student learning.[6] This approach has a theory of action which leaves in a "black box" the variables connecting leadership to student learning.

There are reasons to be skeptical about the primary assumption underlying the direct effects approach. The influence on student learning of both district and school-level leadership is widely considered to be indirect (e.g., Hallinger and Heck 1996). At the school level, for example, leadership most directly influences such variables as teachers' beliefs, values, and practices; the nature of organizational structures; and the relationships created between schools and families and the like. So leaders improve student learning to the extent that they are successful in changing the status of variables such as these.

But leaders are not the only influence on such variables. Teachers often experience considerable stress from the blizzard of initiatives flowing into their schools from either their district or policy makers at the provincial or state levels. The instructional repertoire teachers' use is regularly constrained by the number and nature of students in their classrooms, something not often under the control of the school leader. And the content of teachers' instruction is often shaped in significant measure by

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[6] We understand that both of these examples likely contain some elements of what we refer to as the "synergistic effects" approach but avoid caveats in the interest of clarifying the basic features of each approach.

the content of the high stakes tests to which schools in many jurisdictions are increasingly held accountable.

It is this appreciation of the wide range of influences on variables that directly effect student learning that underlies the quite different approach to leadership development that has been adopted in Ontario and explored in this chapter. Neither school nor district leaders, by themselves, stand much chance of significantly improving the status of many of the variables that matter most for students. So, even the most sophisticated leadership development initiatives are unlikely to have significant impacts on the improvement of student learning unless they work "hand-in-glove" with more comprehensive efforts in their environments aimed at this goal.

The eight lessons outlined in this chapter demonstrate how many challenges facing comprehensive, large-scale reform efforts to improve student learning can be addressed through synergistic approaches to leadership development initiatives. It needs to be acknowledged, however, that arguments about the relative contributions to student learning of synergistic vs. direct effects approach are, at this point, evidence free. Collecting such evidence will be a daunting task. But the vast sums of money now being devoted to leadership development make that task an unavoidable one to tackle in the very near future.

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Chapter 21
Leadership for Learning: Educating Educational Leaders

Christine Forde

Introduction

The role of school headteachers/principals has evolved significantly, particularly as the demand for high performing schools has become a political imperative globally and so the question of how educational leaders should be educated is a central concern. However, this question of the development of educational leaders is contentious because of the nature of professional learning is itself complex particularly the relationship between leadership development and practice in schools. This chapter examines one specific area of leadership development, that of headship preparation. There is, as Davies et al (2005) argue, only limited evidence about how to prepare and develop school leadership or headship and the role and scope of educational leadership continues to evolve. The chapter considers how best this relationship between leadership and learning (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009) might be forged in headship/principalship preparation programmes. Approaches to leadership development can be characterised as three broad models: apprenticeship models, knowledge based programmes and experiential learning programmes. This chapter begins by examining critically a number of different approaches to the development of leadership in education. Then the chapter sets one educational system – that of Scotland, UK – as a case study and draws from a number of recent research and development projects on headship preparation. In this final section the discussion focuses on the tension between individual transformation and institutional transformation and the construction and place of knowledge in the preparation of headteachers/principals.

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The Importance of Leadership Development

While leadership development has become a significant issue in many education systems, as Bush (2008) notes, there are many national systems, in both developed and developing countries, where preparation is not deemed necessary. Lumby et al. (2009) also report that in some systems, there is no perception of leadership as an area of specialisation and so there exists little or no leadership development with progress into school leadership roles being achieved through the demonstration of effective teaching. The situation is, however, changing: '[i]n the twenty first century, there is a growing realisation that headship is a specialist occupation that requires specific preparation' (Bush 2008: 26) and this change is evident partly because of the increased complexity of the role and of schools but also because the impact of leadership on a school and on the opportunities afforded pupils is recognised. Where there is provision for leadership development there are differences in the status accorded; in some systems completion of leadership development programmes are not mandatory for progression into headship roles, whereas in other systems, certification before progress to school leadership is required. There are also variations evident in the timing of leadership development programmes whether this should be preparation before a headteacher post is taken up or should be undertaken following appointment possibly as an enhanced induction. Pont et al (2008: 107) in the OECD report on *Improving School Leadership* argue that while 'school leadership development has become a reality across OECD countries in the past 10–15 years, there is still a need for more coherent approaches to leadership development'.

There is increased specific provision for leadership development, including headship preparation, but there are a variety of approaches; where leadership development has been established, this can take many forms and variations can be seen within as well as across national systems. Pont et al do not advocate one model or approach to leadership development or indicate a specific point in a teaching career when leadership development should begin but instead advocate a wider understanding of the processes of leadership development: 'leadership development is broader than specific programmes of activity or intervention and can be done through a combination of formal and informal processes throughout the stages and contexts of leadership practice' (p 108). Preparation for headship is one critical element in the continuum of leadership preparation. This chapter will now explore a variety of approaches to headship preparation which can be broadly divided into three models: apprenticeship approaches, knowledge-based models and experiential learning-based models.

How Should Leaders Be Educated?

Gronn (2002) in tracing the development of leadership formation argues that 'customisation' is increasingly evident across diverse education systems internationally where provision is now driven by the market, the product being determined not by the provider but elsewhere often by government or professional agencies:

'The presumption under customised leadership formation arrangements, then, is that leaders will fit or conform to a desired type', Gronn's often cited 'designer-leadership' or 'leadership-by-design' (2002), where externally developed standards specify what it means to be a leader. The construction of professional standards specifies the outcomes of leadership development programmes but there has also been considerable work on the design of leadership development programmes. Bush et al. (2007) in their survey of school leadership development characterised two polar models of leadership development: 'traditional leadership learning' and 'emergent twenty-first century leadership learning'. However, while this polarisation highlights some of the changes evident in many programmes of headship preparation, there is still considerable debate about what form the education of educational leaders should take. The various approaches to leadership development can be characterised into three broad areas which I will consider:

- An apprentice-based approach where the prerequisite skills in leadership and management skills are required through experience in schools, that is learning 'on the job';
- A knowledge-based approach where masters level qualifications in the area of leadership and management are undertaken at a university;
- An experiential learning-based approach where there is a focus on structured sets of experiences to acquire the necessary understandings, skills and personal development.

While there are clearly overlaps between these three approaches in specific schemes, distinctions can be made in terms of the foundational idea upon which leadership development is premised. In knowledge-based approaches, a key focus is the development of knowledge and understanding of the principles of leadership and management in schools. Knowledge development is an aspect of experiential learning as well where the focus is on moving from principles into practice. Across apprenticeship approaches and experiential learning programmes, experience plays the central role. Distinctions though can be made between acquiring skill in dealing with issues and functions as they arise day to day on the job in apprenticeship approaches and coherent programmes of experiential learning which involve the drawing together of ideas and practices from a range of sources to plan and reflect critically on structured sets of experiences both 'on the job' and in other settings. While the various schemes and programmes considered below might involve a range of learning strategies it is useful to explore each of the approaches to consider the place of experience, knowledge development and experiential learning and the balance of these in any headship preparation programme. Each of these approaches will now be considered.

Apprenticeship Approaches

There has been a clear tradition of the development of leaders by means of an 'apprentice' model with likely leaders (either self-determined or 'talent spotting') moving through successive levels of management of a school gaining the necessary

experience to take on increased responsibility. This partly reflects a historical position where the reputation of being a good teacher was regarded as more important for headship than specific leadership and management skills. It also reflects a context when there were few demands on headteachers in terms of strategic management, school performance and public accountability. It might be argued that with the institution of professional standards and 'designer' (Gronn 2002) programmes for leadership development that 'the apprenticeship model' is no longer pertinent in a discussion about headship preparation. However, there remains a strong residual feeling that experience in school is the most effective form of leadership development, and other forms might be seen as detracting from the work in school (MacBeath et al. 2009) or have little relevance.

In apprenticeship approaches, development is often through role modelling and through informal support provided by more experienced leaders. However, there are concerns about both the potential haphazard nature of this development process and its deep conserving tendencies. Rhodes and Brundrett (2006) highlight the limitations of relying on an apprenticeship approach, finding that succession planning in many primary schools in England was unstructured. More fundamentally are the dangers of conservatism particularly where the dominant mode of learning is imitation: sets of practices are reproduced through successive generations. Nevertheless, there are a variety of approaches in which the gaining of experience in schools is the underpinning principle of leadership development strategies. These approaches include work shadowing schemes, internships, 'acting up' posts, that is temporary appointments to a management post and the use of prior experience for certification. The apprenticeship aspect is evident in the 'time served' quality of the process where the apprentice through observation, modelling and the completion of specific tasks of increasing complexity gains the required skills. In many of the programmes that use an apprenticeship approach the learner goes to another school or moves into another post to gain the experience. At the heart of this approach is a view that 'real life' opportunities are a rich source of learning and indeed an essential aspect of headship preparation.

A critical element of headship preparation is the transition into that role, particularly dealing with the shock that many serving headteachers recall in taking on this role (Cowie and Crawford 2009). The use of approaches which provide access to experiences has many attractions in easing this transition and among those trialled in England some have built on the traditional apprenticeship models (Crow 2005; Earley 2009). Simkins et al. (2009) review a work-shadowing scheme where potential headteachers, senior managers in the primary sector, shadowed an experienced headteacher in another school. Though Simkins et al noted variations with some examples more oriented towards a placement looking at a specific issue, and other examples which combined shadowing with other forms of development, there were instances of 'pure shadowing'. Here the inexperienced leader works alongside an experienced headteacher through the normal course of events.

Internships are another approach, akin to clinical experience in medical education, and are used in leadership preparation programmes particularly in the USA. Here internships are largely used as part of headship preparation programmes where the

completion of an internship is a mandatory element in certification necessary for advancement to a principal role in school. Barnett et al (2009) discussing, principalship preparation in the USA, report on a range of different models of internship from more lengthy, intense and structured programmes to less focussed experiences. In this study the authors found different forms of internship, some established by state systems, some self-standing, while others were part of a programme of study based at a university. Though, as Barnet et al. observed, there is limited empirical evidence about the impact of internships on practice these potentially offer some potent learning experiences. From some of the case studies the personal dimensions of headship preparation, such as beginning to gain an insight into the role of a headteacher/principal, the development of an identity as a headteacher and the building of greater confidence, are more evident. Internships can provide rich and varied sets of experiences and activities enabling participants to experience leadership across different schools and districts which vary in their geographical location and pupil population and to engage in activities around learning, school improvement and achievement.

Potentially internships offer many possibilities, especially in fostering leadership for learning. However, Barnett et al. (2009) noted issues in the quality of the learning experience of internees especially where there was a limited structure and focus in the internship. This fragmentary nature of the experience was compounded often by the low level tasks being undertaken by the participants. A critical issue is the quality of mentoring support, often seen as an integral part of the internship, and significant variability was noted which had an impact on the development of participants. Experience sits side by side with imitation learning in internships and again there is a bias towards reproducing rather than reshaping practice including perpetuating more hierarchical models of leadership.

The next two examples of apprenticeship models of leadership development draw from work undertaken in Scotland, firstly the use of 'acting posts' and secondly the accreditation of prior experience for certification. Acting posts, temporary appointments to provide cover for headship posts vacant because of ill heath, secondment or retirement, have been identified as a leadership development opportunity (Scottish Executive (SE) 2006a). Draper and McMichael (2002) found that 10% of posts in secondary and primary schools in Scotland were filled by acting appointments and so this is a significant experience for many aspiring headteachers. Draper and McMichael found that many of these posts were filled by the 'next in line', the deputy headteacher. However, there were concerns about the support offered to those in acting posts. MacBeath et al. (2009) also reported that a period as acting head 'acting up' was an important pathway for some headteachers and again, there were issues about the level of support those in acting headteacher posts received. While for some, this experience boosted both their confidence and aspiration for headteacher roles, for others, it helped them decide not to seek headship.

One further aspect of apprenticeship learning can be found in the accreditation of prior experience for certification such as in the Accelerated Route (AR) in the original Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) Programme (SEED 1998a).

With the establishment of the SQH as a preparatory programme for aspiring headteachers, it was recognised that there would be a cohort of senior managers in schools who had substantial experience and skill. An AR was created to enable this group to complete the SQH (SEED 1998a) by presenting evidence of their previous work in school. While many candidates who pursued this route found the tasks of reviewing on their experience, compiling their portfolio of evidence and reflective commentary, a means to look in depth at their role and development as a leader and to support them in their decision to move to headship, there were also significant issues. There was some degree of cynicism as noted by Menter et al. (2005), of the AR being seen as 'going through hoops'. However, the more challenging issue was that of impact on practice as the AR was retrospective. Candidates had to self-evaluate their work as a leader against the Standard for Headship (SfH) (SEED 1998b), gather evidence of their previous experience and then 'fill in' gaps in their experience. Consequently, the focus was on the recording of previous experience rather than the enhancement of current practice. In contrast, in the standard route (SR) in the SQH (SEED 1998a) candidates have to work collaboratively to take forward a significant area in the school's improvement agenda, and the contribution to the school's developmental culture, the development of pupil learning and the enhancing of distributive forms of leadership were found (Menter et al. 2005).

There are then issues with an apprenticeship approach but we should not discount the apprenticeship dimension of leadership preparation. Role modelling can be an important aspect in the preparation for headship, though MacBeath et al. (2009) found that the role model was not always positive, with some serving teachers reporting that their reason for moving into headship was having witnessed poor practice and deciding that there was a better way of doing this job. However, this cannot be the only approach because one of the concerns about an overreliance on apprenticeship approaches to headship development is the danger of narrowing the pool of likely leaders as access to opportunities lack coordination and structured support. Further the focus is on replicating current 'good practice' and so there is limited access to wider learning opportunities, understandings and resources critical for school leadership today. Experience alone then appears to be insufficient because equally significant in making internships, work shadowing programmes or acting up posts, productive learning experiences were opportunities to reflect on experiences either with others completing internships or with a mentor. Simkins et al. (2009: 245) see work shadowing as a valuable tool in the move into headship but argue that this cannot stand alone because 'the value of the shadowing process depends on the ways in which the participant is helped to interpret what he or she sees and the relationship that develops with the head as a result'. The focus is not solely on the day to day issues that emerge, what Simkins et al. refer to a 'micro framing' (p. 247) but also on 'macro framing' (p. 247) that is, wider issues of strategy and purposes are considered in order to deepen the 'apprentice's' understanding of what it means to be a headteacher. Similarly, the strength of the AR in the SQH was found in the opportunities for reflective 'macro-framing' of issues with other candidates and in considering wider issues in education and so knowledge development is an important component.

Knowledge-Based Models

In the knowledge-based approaches, the use of master's level qualifications to prepare school leaders has been a long standing approach used in different education systems. In some systems this remains mandatory while in others, individuals pursue such programmes as part of their own career planning. McCarthy and Forsyth (2009), writing about school principalship preparation in USA, examine academic-based programmes which historically have been the dominant form of leadership development. University-based programmes have received criticism in the USA. With the *Standards for school leaders* by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) in 1996 (McCarthy and Forsyth 2009) many of the university-based programmes now combine knowledge acquisition with achievement of professional standards. Nevertheless in his report *Educating school leaders*, Levine (2005) remained critical of this approach to leadership development.

The question of 'practical relevancy' (Lumby et al. 2009: 185) is a perennial issue in university provided programmes of leadership development. The concerns raised in Levine's (2005) report echo the critique of the use of academic programmes focusing on knowledge acquisition in professional preparatory programmes by Schon (1983) where he argues that the process of building knowledge for later application in the workplace does not reflect the processes underpinning professional practice particularly of skilled practitioners that he observed. Schon's critique is based on the more traditional form of academic programmes and this polarisation is less evident as the nature of academic-based programmes has evolved. McCarthy and Forsyth (2009) note the development from the social science orientation of master's programmes up to the 1980s to a more specific focus on the technical aspects of management of an organisation. There are issues about the content of these programmes – what aspects should be included in a curriculum and what should be the outcomes of such programmes (Bush 2008). One of the issues that relates to the outcomes of master's level qualifications is whether these are designed as a preparation for further scholarship or professional practice, so the research orientation of many master's programmes competes with the vocational aspects of headship preparation. This tension becomes evident when academic programmes not only have to meet the academic demands of post-graduateness, which include a strong research element, but also must ensure the achievement of competencies set out in professional standards.

One of the criticisms of knowledge-based programmes has been the perception of the distance between universities and 'the real world' of schools. Another issue related to knowledge development approaches is the perception that knowledge development programmes are based on a narrow set of pedagogic practices, largely didactic models to build up knowledge and assessment processes based on the testing of this (Gronn et al. 2008). Whereas in the past many of these programmes were similar to MBAs with the focus on technical aspects of management in an organisation, what has emerged more recently is a specific educational orientation of these programmes were the role of leadership is related centrally to the enhancement of

teaching and learning in the form of 'instructional' or 'educative' leadership. The most common development has been the combination of academic-based elements with practical elements through school development activities. As LaMagdeleine et al. (2009: 131) note, critics of university-based programmes argue for 'the formation of stronger ties between K-12 public education and university faculty, for authentic and regularly occurring school-based learning experiences to better develop the skills needed for today's school leaders'. McCarthy and Forsyth (2009) note some of the innovations evident in knowledge-based programmes such as the use of social learning processes with cohorts learning collaboratively or the use of problem-based learning to pose 'real issues'. Lumby et al. (2009) also note different initiatives such as the use of 'work-embedded learning, the creation of partnership sites with school districts, field residencies, principal apprenticeship programmes and action research' (p. 183). The combination of different learning strategies is helping to create an interchange of ideas and experiences in headship preparation programmes. Indeed part of the reaction to Levine's (2005) report, which was highly critically of this form of leadership development, was to suggest that the report reflected on a type of leadership development that no longer existed (Young et al. 2005). The programmes though still based in universities and still drawing from bodies of knowledge were further 'up the curve' in bringing together different strategies than Levine allowed for in his critique. There remains, then, questions about the place of knowledge in headship preparation, an issue we will return to in the final section. In the next section we will consider how blended experiential learning could be used as a means of headship preparation. However, there are also significant tensions in the formulation of blended experiential learning.

Experiential Models

In the approaches we have examined so far there are both strengths and limitations. Apprenticeship approaches provide opportunities to address the day to day demands of headship and support the individual as he or she forges an identity as a head-teacher. These approaches are heavily dependent on the context, particularly with structured opportunities being available alongside good leadership practice in a specific setting. Knowledge development models can provide a range of structured learning opportunities where learners can access wider bodies of knowledge and reflect deeply on their experiences and their own purposes as an aspirant head-teacher. However, following Corderio's (1996, quoted in Taylor et al. 2009: 326) map of different pedagogic strategies which moves along a continuum from 'out of context' to 'in context' based on the degree of participation in the community of practice, there is a danger that a focus in knowledge development through didactic strategies leads to either minimal participation or at best peripheral participation in the context of practice. Even where pedagogies are more interactive and focus on concrete problems, there is still an element of artificiality and the link to the context in which individual participants are leaders can be distant.

Thus, while there are limitations in both the apprenticeship and the knowledge-based approaches, it is clear that both experience and knowledge development are significant aspects of a more complex process of headship. Where these approaches to extend experience and knowledge work most powerfully is in the combining of different learning opportunities to build ideas, explore the nature of these through practice and reflect on these experiences. Pont et al. (2008: 133) in their report on school leadership development in OECD countries, note a number of features of successful leadership development programmes undertaken prior to appointment as a headteacher, where experience and knowledge come together:

- A coherent curriculum aligned to state and professional standards which emphasise instructional leadership and school improvement
- Active student-centred instruction
- Social and professional support as well as formalised mentoring and advising
- Designed internships which provide exposure.

In the next section we examine how blended learning experiential approaches may combine the possibilities for learning offered by the other two approaches. Here a particular focus will be on the development of programmes for headship preparation in Scotland. I will begin setting out the context of leadership development in Scotland.

Leadership Development in Scotland

Leadership development has been a significant issue in Scottish education for a number of years but the form this should take and who should be involved in providing opportunities remains a contentious issue. We can see the various threads in the debate evident if we look briefly at the way in which the area of leadership development has evolved. Historically, master's programmes in educational management have long existed in Scotland though these have been pursued by relatively small numbers of teachers. Other than individual teachers choosing to pursue an academic award in educational management, there was little coherent provision for the preparation of headteachers, and the limited opportunities for development that were available were largely targeted at serving headteachers, taking forward the local government policy. In the early 1990s a national programme of courses was set up which coincided with significant changes in the management and governance of schools where duties previously with the Local Authorities (LAs) were now delegated to schools. The focus of these programmes for serving headteachers was to provide the necessary technical knowledge of management processes such as school development planning, monitoring and evaluation, financial management and staff appraisal (O'Brien et al. 2008).

It was out of dissatisfaction with the traditional apprenticeship approach of progression to headship, by moving through the levels of management or completing knowledge-based programmes, that alternatives to leadership development were sought in Scotland. Preparation for headship became and remains a key priority with the development of blended experiential learning programmes, initially the SQH, and subsequently programmes offering Flexible Routes to Headship (FRH).

There has been considerable debate about these two approaches to headship preparation and at the heart of this debate is an understanding of leadership and its contribution to institutional development.

Scotland is following trends (OECD 2008) noted by Huber and West (2002) in their comparative study of leadership development with a focus on raising pupil achievement, emphasis placed on the personal development of leaders and a focus on instructional leadership, or as it is described in Scottish policy, 'leadership for learning' (Her Majesty's Inspectorate in Education (HMIe) 2007). In Scotland headteachers are clearly charged with a transformational role in which their task is to raise achievement in line with national priorities set by central government:

> The headteacher … He/she provides appropriate vision, leadership and direction to ensure high standards of education for all the children and young people in their care so that they can become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors (SE 2005a: 4).

In relation to the preparation of headteachers, the question that then arises is whether this idea of transformational leadership is to be achieved through a focus on personal transformation of the aspirant school leader or should the focus be on developing the skill of the aspirant headteacher to bring about institutional transformation. The focus of the transformation becomes crucial in the design of preparatory programmes.

The Development of Headship Preparation Programmes in Scotland

The SQH was launched in 1998 and is a dual award combining an academic award, the *Post Graduate Diploma in School Leadership and Management* with the professional award, the *Scottish Qualification for Headship*. By successfully completing the programme candidates will have demonstrated their achievement of *The Standard for Headship* (SfH) (SEED 1998b; SE 2005a). This programme is run by three consortia, each of which comprise universities working in partnership with LAs, and these consortia are accredited by the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCs), the professional regulatory body, as providers of the SQH. While the universities make the award of the Post Graduate Diploma, the professional qualification is currently awarded by the Scottish Government. When the SQH was instituted in 1998, it was the first professional qualification for serving teachers and this was the first element of a national continuing professional development framework (CPD) (SEED 2003). The SQH continues as a major programme for the preparation of aspirant headteachers. More recently, a proposal to provide alternative routes have been taken forward by the development of flexible routes; and to date there have been three projects: the National Flexible Routes to Headship; the Developing Alternative Routes Expertise (DARE) project in the Eastern SQH Consortium and the Western SQH Consortium Flexible Route (FR).

The proposal for alternative routes for aspirant headteachers grew out of 'the leadership agenda' highlighted as a critical element in realising the aims of the

major programme of curriculum reform, *Ambitious Excellent Schools: A Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) (SE 2004), where greater autonomy was to be given to LAs and schools to develop their own strategies to achieve predetermined outcomes. There is across education in Scotland an unremitting focus on the improvement of pupil attainment and leadership is regarded as pivotal. The notion of leadership and its role in the transformation of schools is very much to the fore in *A Curriculum for Excellence* and has among the declared intentions the development of the two areas of leadership and teaching. In this document, leadership is cited as central to this process of reform and is characterised largely in terms of influence and vision. Leadership is constructed largely as school leadership – often used as an alternate for headteacher.

> High expectations, high quality leadership and confident ambitious schools
>
> Good leadership is critical to a successful school. Success comes from aiming high with the clear vision, ethos and communication that good leadership brings. We will act to support high quality school leadership and inspired, ambitious school communities (5)

At the same time the changing position of teachers is reified:

> Professional freedom for teachers and schools to tailor learning to the needs of individual young people.
>
> The people best placed to make judgements about the learning needs of individual young people are those who work with them closely. Within a framework of national standards and local authority support, teachers and other professionals in schools must have freedom to exercise their professional judgement to exercise excellent learning and teaching. (14)

The 'leadership agenda' (SE 2004) was taken forward through *Ambitious, Excellent Schools: Leadership – a Discussion Paper* (SE 2005b) in which the Scottish Executive set out a range of strategies where the intention was to build a broad programme which: '…will aim to bring coherence and connection with many projects and initiatives already underway as well as provide a context for future innovation' (p. 2). This broad programme is wide ranging and consists of a number of aspects or experiences:

- Collaborative networks which focus on the development of practice, problem solving and shared learning
- Coaching and mentoring opportunities
- Opportunities to step back, review, reflect and develop personal leadership practice and learn from practice in other educational systems and in other organisational contexts
- Formal programmes and frameworks designed to support progression and career development for education professionals
- Research projects which contribute new learning
- Seminars, master classes, conference and speaker programmes which provide access to thought leadership and leading practice (SE 2005b: 3).

However, what emerged subsequently from this broad proposal was a bias towards programmes and opportunities for personal development for serving and aspirant headteachers through high profile events such as week-long international leadership

summer schools for serving headteachers, coaching programmes and personal reflection through programmes such as *Columba 1400* (Deakins et al. 2005).

At the same time the Scottish Executive decided that all those appointed to headship would be expected to meet the SfH (SEED 2006a, foreword). In *Achieving the Standard for Headship – Providing Choice and Alternatives: A Consultation Document* (SEED 2006a: 5) the proposal for flexible routes based on individual learning plans was set out. The focus on personal transformation as the outcome of leadership development is evident in the outcome of the consultation process (SEED 2006a), in the alternative programme of headship preparation established in 2007 by SEED, and the Flexible Route to Headship (FRH) (Gronn et al. 2008). The national FRH programme is run by the National CPD Team and funded directly by the Scottish Government. Unlike the SQH, the national FRH programme is currently not accredited nor do successful candidates receive a professional accredited award but instead they receive from the Scottish Government a certificate indicating their 'Achievement of the Standard for Headship'. The programme is delivered by the national CPD team working with locally based coaches. At the same time that the national FRH programme was piloted, two of the SQH Consortia, the Western SQH Consortium and Eastern SQH Consortium piloted different flexible route programmes. These different programmes are mapped out in Table 21.1.

All these programmes are designed to enable successful candidates to demonstrate their achievement of the SfH (SE 2005a). There was a concern to ensure rigour in the programme and an equivalence with the established SQH (SEED 2006a) and so many components of the original SQH programme were taken up in the various flexible routes. There are strong similarities between the four programmes, particularly related to the final assessment processes: a submission of a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the SfH, alongside a reflective commentary examining their practice and the process of their learning as aspirant headteachers. Further, after successful completion of this written assessment, a final oral assessment is conducted to test the candidate's holistic understanding of the SfH and its implications for his or her practice as a headteacher. The main distinguishing feature is the focus on coaching in each of the flexible routes.

Scotland, like other systems, is concerned about recruitment into headteacher posts (MacBeath et al. 2009) and so the expansion of headship preparation programmes is part of a wider leadership development strategy (SEED 2003; SE 2005b). The setting in which the idea of an alternative route emerged included discussion about existing leadership capacity, development and succession planning, given the demographic profile of the profession when there would be significant numbers of serving headteachers retiring in the near future. However, the critical issue remains about the focus of these headship preparation programmes. While there are similarities between the headship preparation programmes mapped out above, there are significant differences which we need to consider. Thus a key question relates to the purpose of headship preparation: Is it about the development of the individual leader and so focus on the individual's skills and abilities, particularly in interpersonal leadership, influence and vision, or is it about the individual's ability to bring about organisational change? These two models of personal transformation and institutional

Table 21.1 Headship preparation programmes in Scotland

Aspect	SQH: Standard Route	National Flexible Route the Standard for Headship	Flexible Route to SQH Western SQH Consortium	DARE Project – Eastern SQH Consortium
Taught component	Four taught units with tutor led sessions Distance learning programme	Taught elements led by coaches	Taught elements with university tutor Distance learning programme	Two taught units in the Standard Route to the SQH with university tutor
Individual support	Tutor support for work based project School based mentor (normally HT)	Coaching sessions	Coaching sessions by trained coach – experienced HT or senior manager	Coaching sessions by tutor
Summative Assessment	Summative assessment task at end of each unit Self evaluation Situational Analysis Interim Report on School based project Reflective commentary & portfolio on School based project Viva	Portfolio Commentary Presentation and interview	Reflective commentary and portfolio Viva	Reflective commentary and portfolio Viva
Certification	PG Diploma in School Leadership and Management (SQH)	Achievement of the Standard for Headship	Scottish Qualification for Headship	PG Diploma in School Leadership and Management (SQH)

transformation will be explored by comparing two of the preparatory programmes for aspirant headteachers in Scotland: the national FRH and the SQH.

Individual Transformation

Huber and West (2002) in their comparative study of leadership development chart the way in which the focus of leadership preparation and development has changed, historically reflecting the way in which understandings of leadership have evolved: from a focus on the personal qualities and traits, to the behaviour and approaches of successful leaders, to an appreciation of the significance of the context in shaping leadership, to the current focus on the link between leadership and the transformation of the organisation. The focus in Scottish education is very much on idea of leadership as transformational, but the personal traits and personal qualities highlighted by Huber and West, remain 'presences' in the development processes for the preparation of headteachers in schools and there is a tension between this personal focus set against institutional development.

Bush et al. (2007) noted the importance of the personalised dimension in leadership development programmes but there is a question about how this idea of personalisation is realised in practice. At one level, it can refer to the creation of an individual programme of development tailored to meet the specific development needs of an aspirant headteacher. This was the aspiration of the national FRH programme. In the consultation for the national FRH, it was proposed that:

> flexibility should emerge from a plan of activity developed individually by each candidate. The opportunity to put together a personal plan of action to meet the SfH, with varying levels of support as necessary, will allow an individualised approach to develop, tailored to the candidate's own particular context, experience and needs. This will be both demanding and challenging and require candidates to take professional and personal responsibility in developing their programme of activities (SEED 2006b: 7).

However, the national FRH programme cohered around a common set of developmental activities. Where we can see 'personalised' leadership development is in the emphasis on the personal transformation of individual aspirants through a focus on the affective dimensions of leadership and development of the soft skills of leadership. Although the national FRH programme had a set of common activities, the focal point of the programme remained that of personal transformation. Coaching was the core development process in this programme. At the outset, all candidates had to complete a 360° evaluation instrument, the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI) which dealt with interpersonal skills, and was consonant with the thrust of the coaching to support behavioural change. In this programme, where the purpose was the achievement of a professional standard, the SfH (SEED 2005a), the role of coach is multi-faceted with coaches moving in and out of the roles of tutor, mentor, assessor and facilitator as well as that of coach. Within this role there were some inherent tensions, for example, the tension between the teaching role of tutor in the development of knowledge and in assessment against a professional standard and the processes of coaching to enhance self-awareness and self-efficacy.

Nevertheless, the coaching element was both well received by candidates and an evident strength of the programme: many candidates contrasted their previous styles with 'a new found attempt to be more reflective, listening and supportive of their colleagues' (Gronn et al. 2008: 56).

In the SQH programme personal development is one of the areas included but there is a less concentrated focus on this. Candidates undertake a 360° feedback process gathering views of colleagues about their leadership skills in the personal and interpersonal attributes noted in the SfH (SE 2005a). This feedback is used as the basis of planning development opportunities to enhance this area of practice by structured activities in school, working with the school-based mentor or undertaking specific personal skills training. There remain issues about variability in mentoring support and the assessment of this aspect (O'Brien and Murphy 2003). Candidates reported the usefulness of these processes, particularly in developing greater self-awareness and confidence (Menter et al. 2005), and like their counterparts in the national FRH programme see these as crucial in building collaborative practice (Gronn et al. 2008).

Clearly personal transformation is an important aspect of headship preparation particularly with enabling aspirant headteachers to develop greater self-awareness and resilience. However, there remains the issue about personal transformation as it relates to institutional transformation.

Institutional Transformation

Many of the schemes examined in this chapter so far have set the learning of aspirant headteachers in the 'real' context of a school. Even traditional knowledge-based programmes now combine knowledge development (Lumby et al. 2009) with experiential learning. Approaches such as internships, work shadowing, and even in instances of acting up posts, the emphasis is on observing and reproducing current practice. While such experience provides aspirant headteachers an opportunity to build personal confidence, acquire skills in the day-to-day processes of leadership and management, there is a question about how a strategic and educative perspective might be developed if leadership for learning is to flourish. Essential then, in a programme for aspirant headteachers, is the opportunity to lead whole school development to bring about sustained improvement.

While there are similarities between the national FRH and the SQH programmes, a distinguishing feature relates to the construction of the process of change and how institutional transformation is to be achieved. The FRH candidates complete one or more workbased projects to demonstrate their achievement of the SfH but this can combine both previous and current practice. Here there is less emphasis on strategic impact with candidates reporting on the change in their leadership style, particularly on the development of colleagues through coaching and the development of distributed leadership. In contrast, the main focus of the SQH programme is on the candidate's ability to bring about institutional improvement by adding to the school's capability for change. Here the emphasis is on sustained change through

developing teacher learning and engagement, building collaborative practice and distributed forms of leadership (Gronn 2000), through which improvement in the quality of the pupil learning experiences can be achieved. The main vehicle for this is a whole school improvement project where the project is deemed successful where there is an impact on learning and on the ability of the school's systems to sustain change (Kerr and Murphy 2004; WSQH 2010). Here it is the process of change that becomes a crucial issue.

In a programme of headship preparation that rests predominantly on coaching, the focus is on enhancing a sense of self-efficacy, self-awareness and communication skills. The initiation of change is through personal influence and motivational strategies. This model relates to classic formulations of leadership where the personal efficacy, influencing skills and vision of the leader are privileged. While the vision might have at its heart pupil learning and achievement, there is a danger that a model of headship preparation developed based on individual transformation becomes less about a generative approach to improvement and, as Fitzgerald and Gunter (2008) in their critique of the notion of 'teacher leadership' argue, more a mechanism through which externally driven reforms are implemented. Building ownership becomes a means of ensuring all 'buy into the vision' underpinning policy initiatives, rather than a critical engagement with the purposes and practices of these initiatives.

The contrast between personal and institutional transformation rests on the position of knowledge within these development programmes. The SfH (SE 2005a), defines a set of professional actions which are underpinned by three essential elements of knowledge and understanding, values and personal attributes as well (Reeves et al. 1998).

The SfH identifies specific areas (see Table 21.2) where those who achieve the standard are expected to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

Table 21.2 Knowledge and understanding in the SfH

4.2 Knowledge and understanding: This element identifies the knowledge and understanding of contemporary developments in teaching and learning, education, schools, schooling and society which are required by successful headteachers.	
4.2.1 Learning and teaching:	Headteachers apply an up to date knowledge and understanding of research in learning and teaching and its implications for improving practice, and need to be aware of quality assurance strategies.
4.2.2 Education policy, schools and schooling:	Headteachers apply a knowledge and critical understanding of contemporary developments in education policy, schools and schooling, including the vision of what integrated children and young people's services should offer.
4.2.3 Social and environmental trends and developments:	Headteachers apply a knowledge and understanding of contemporary developments in society (including trends and changes in family patterns, work patterns, the media, leisure and politics), in the environment and in the wider global community.
4.2.4 Leadership and management:	Headteachers apply a knowledge and understanding of leadership concepts and practice, and of strategic and operational management.

However, the focus in this section of the SfH is on 'knowing that' while 'knowing how' (Burgoyne and Williams 2007, cited in Lewis and Murphy 2008: 19) is contained in the professional actions. Concerns were raised about the limited focus on knowledge building in the national FRH programme where in candidate's personal learning plans there were few references to the development of the areas of knowledge covered in the SfH (Gronn et al. 2008).

Headship preparation cannot be limited to personal transformation but has to enable engagement with wider issues. Cowie and Crawford (2009: 8), in their analysis of the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship) and the SQH, argue that

> although the preparation programmes are set within the prevailing orthodoxies and focused on helping participants demonstrate they have attained the standard in each country, there is considerable emphasis placed in critical thinking and professional values with discussion and reflection on practice, suggesting continued reliance on the 'reflective practitioner mode' of teacher education…this locates preparation programmes within debates about the nature of contemporary professional identity and places aspiring and new headteachers in a 'complicated nexus between policy, ideology and practice' (Stronach et al. 2002: 109) (8).

However, while critical engagement with wider bodies of knowledge is central to the practice of leadership, there needs to be a much richer understanding of the place and nature of knowledge in transformational leadership practice if the aspirations of leadership for learning at to be achieved.

'Leadership for Learning' is a keynote in Scottish educational policy, most evident in a recent policy from the inspectorate: *Leadership for Learning: The challenges of leading in a time of change,* (HMIe 2007). It is argued that this specific coupling of 'leadership' and 'learning' means putting learning and learners at the centre of the agenda. The central thrust of the advice given is about time for 'reflection on teaching and learning' (p. 50). However, the process of leading change mapped out very much reflects a management system for change implementation:

- Clear remits for working groups and/or committees
- Time for staff to talk about and reflect on learning and to learn from each other
- Clear tasks linked to improvement priorities
- SMART targets and associated milestones
- Regular monitoring and progress reporting (HMIe 2007: 50).

There is only one reference to a more generative process 'involvement in action research projects' (p. 50). However, there is no elaboration of this idea and how it will contribute to the development of pedagogy and learning. Unless the idea of knowledge creation lies central to the process of headship preparation we will continue to fall back on change strategies that rely on individual transformation rather than institutional sustained change, on a process largely of developing the aspirant headteacher's influencing skills to persuade others to implement externally developed policies and to set and monitor targets.

Conclusion

Hargreaves (1999) in his discussion of 'knowledge-creating' schools highlights a number of features which only limitedly overlap with the features found in school improvement studies which are now embedded in quality assurance indicators. The development of attitudes, and the enhancement of a culture where change can flourish, are regarded as essential features but are only the starting point. The model of change leadership that is emerging from the SQH programme is to move from an emphasis on influence and monitoring to foregrounding the knowledge creating strategies advocated by Hargreaves. Thus the central focus of the SQH programme is the work-based project in the design and conduct of which collaborative practice combines with investigative strategies and evidence-based decision making. At each stage there is an emphasis on gathering of evidence, analysis and evaluation. Hargreaves (1999) argues that there is a need to move from individual's 'tinkering' with their practice to bring about short term developments to a situation where knowledge about the processes of teaching and learning in a specific school is generated, shared and used systematically to shape practice. This process of enabling aspirant headteachers to enquiry based approaches to leadership and improvement has to be part of headship preparation, combining with 'on the job' experiences, more traditional forms of knowledge building and alongside personal development. It is only in this way headteachers can be genuine leaders of learning by fostering a deep engagement with teachers in examining, trialling and refining pedagogy.

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Chapter 22
Leadership Learning That Makes a Difference in Schools: Pushing the Frontier at the University of Maine

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Introduction

School teachers and administrators have long understood that their formal education contributed only a fraction of what they really needed to know and be able to do to succeed in the busy and complex world of classrooms and schools. To be sure, to function well in these world, professional educators need healthy doses of what passes as "the science" of their craft. But they also must have refined skills in understanding children and adults, in forming productive relationships with them, and in judging what they require in order to teach effectively. Learning the craft, then, means cultivating *performance capacities* – the ability to make their craft "come alive" in their daily practice.

We four colleagues at the University of Maine have been exploring methods for helping school leaders develop these performance capacities. For the past 15 years, we have taken the lead from our students, engaging with them in the arduous work of honing skills, judgment, and knowledge to make it accessible and applicable in their performance as leaders. Our students have been most articulate and insistent about the centrality of what we have come to call the interpersonal dimensions of leadership. As one principal put it, "I used to think I needed to know everything [about administration], but I see now that my leadership is mostly about the interpersonal relationships I build."

Many students of schooling and leadership (e.g., Roland Barth, Tom Sergiovanni, Eleanor Drago-Severson, and Michael Fullan) and many more who have explored effective leadership in organizations in general (such as Peter Senge, James McGregor Burns, Daniel Goleman, and Sally Helgesen) concur. Even scholars who take a macro view of organizational improvement have come to understand the essential power of relationships on the front lines; Richard Elmore (2006) writes, "the knowledge and skills required to make schools more effective rely heavily on *skills of human or social interaction*."

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Our field has, ironically, largely ignored the problem of how to help educators deepen their interpersonal capacities. Developing these capacities, though, has been the central focus of our teaching and research at the University of Maine since the early 1990s. Studying our students and our own teaching led us to new insights into how leaders perform and, crucially, how they learn to perform better in their schools. In brief, we came to see our students' learning in three intersecting dimensions of leadership knowledge: the interpersonal, the cognitive, and the intrapersonal. Their ability to integrate these dimensions shapes their success at growing more competent in the performance of leadership in their schools.

William Sullivan and colleagues at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching have been working on a parallel track to ours. Their Project on Professional Learning has followed lawyers, doctors, nurses, clergy, and engineers through formal education and into practice. They have found, as we have, that professional learning that best shapes effective professional performance has three dimensions: the "intellectual or cognitive"; the "often tacit body of skills shared by competent practitioners"; and the "values and attitudes shared by the professional community" (Sullivan 2005: p. 208).

Our teaching and research have engaged us in "un-learning" the largely cognitive predilections of our own educational backgrounds. Sullivan echoes our experience when he writes that "academics have been triumphant" in the evolution of professional education. He goes on to say that "the crucial aspect of apprenticeship – initiation into the wisdom of practice – remains on the margins of academic training" (2005: p. 197). Preparation for educational leadership, like that of other professions, has emphasized the cognitive/intellectual domains, leaving novice leaders to pick up interpersonal skills and techniques from mentors and by trial-and-error.

The only way to break through the wall that separates the university's cognitive dominion and the interpersonal complexities of the workplace is to engage learners' leadership practice from the onset of their formal preparation. Instead of saying, "We will educate you here so that you can perform as an effective leader in the future," we say, "bring the 'people challenges' you face in your leadership work at school, and we will help you to understand them better and to practice skills that might help you perform better tomorrow when you return to school."

Our students, by and large, attest to the power of this approach. It makes their learning, as one student said, "real… I'm working on what I need to get better at if I am going to be a better leader in my school." A recent survey of our graduates indicates that students in our cohort program found learning through this model recognizes their learning needs and styles, guides them in developing understandings of their assets and challenges as leaders, and helps them "become more active as a school leader" (Donaldson et al. 2009b). Respondents said their greatest lessons are frequently about their ability to motivate and engage their colleagues meaningfully in professional improvement. As they take on leadership responsibilities in their schools, many practice and refine the skills necessary to communicate effectively, to address difficult questions and interpersonal conflict more directly, and to advocate successfully for children and effective instruction within their schools and, importantly, within their districts. Most of our students leave feeling solidly grounded. As one

student put it, "I am much closer to finding a sustainable fit between the leadership role I aspire to and my own values and skills as an educator."

The remainder of this chapter describes the model of leadership knowledge we and our students have found so useful. We then share some of the learning methods we have developed to match the particularities of the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge bases that make up leadership performance. These methods rely heavily on making performance itself the object of study. As Richard Elmore says, "The skills of human interaction have to be learned through processes of interaction – modeled, observed, critiqued, rehearsed, modeled again, and so on. There is no other way to learn to do this work effectively than by watching it being done by someone who is better at it than you are – and then being watched by someone who can see things in your practice that you can't" (2006).

The Maine Developmental Model: Integrated Learning in Interpersonal, Cognitive, and Intrapersonal Domains

Our leadership development model revolves around the premise that, since leadership is a performance phenomenon, *learning to lead* requires ongoing leadership experience. Students need access to performance opportunities in which to practice and on which to reflect (Boyatzis et al. 2002; Donaldson and Marnik 1995; Osterman and Kottkamp 1993; Sternberg and Horvath 1999). A single simple definition of leadership frames this work for both students and professors: *Leadership mobilizes people in and around schools to improve student learning in demonstrable ways.* The educational leadership faculty has developed this model by experimenting with off-campus and on-campus cohort programs of 2–3 years in length. The program curriculum engages students in "learning-in-action" activities throughout the experience.

The model posits three complementary dimensions of leadership knowledge. We choose the word "dimension" to describe these aspects of knowledge advisedly. Like the three dimensions of space, these dimensions of knowledge coexist, interact, and together constitute a whole. When leadership is in evidence, people are drawing upon their knowledge in each dimension; the result is the capacity to act effectively so that people are spurred to action. We refer to our model of leadership development as the Interpersonal–Cognitive–Intrapersonal (I–C–I) model, after the three dimensions:

- The Interpersonal refers to the leader's knowledge of how she/he understands others, communicates with others, forms working relationships with others, and contributes to their mobilization.
- The Cognitive involves the leader's knowledge about effective learning and teaching, the organizational dynamics of schools and systems, and theories of leadership and organizational growth.
- The Intrapersonal concerns the leader's knowledge of herself/himself and how this knowledge operates to shape her/his behaviors, beliefs and attitudes, and feelings about work and people.

The model translates fluidly into a framework for learning; that is, it is amenable to planning leadership action by thinking through the knowledge required of the leader in each dimension, to carrying out that action, and then to reflecting on the experience through the lenses of the three dimensions. We have found that even though someone deepens her understanding of effective teaching, that understanding will not become an active component of her leadership until appropriate interpersonal skills can be blended with it. The process of this "blending" is further dependent on the leader's understanding of herself and the "deployment of self" in the service of her school's goals. As educators engage in leadership, they draw from their well of cognitive information about the educational practices they seek to improve, yet their enactment of successful mobilization of others hinges on their interpersonal skills and sensitivities. Their capacity to adjust the strategies and monitor their relationships with others revolves around their self-awareness and self-management skills, their intrapersonal knowledge base. (For more detail on the I–C–I model and the learning experiences in it, see Gordon Donaldson's *How Leaders Learn: Cultivating Capacities for School Improvement*, 2008.)

On the grandest scale, the goal of our practitioner degree programs is for students to develop performance competency as school leaders so that they can mobilize others to affect growth in Maine's schools and school children. That is, we seek to cultivate educators who demonstrate leadership in their work in their schools, not simply "know leadership" models, theories, research, and skills.

The program's goals, curriculum, and assessment structures address learning in the three I–C–I dimensions. To guide our work and our students' learning, we have identified six Knowledge Areas, two in each of the I, C, and I dimensions:

Cognitive

1. An effective school leader has expertise in learning and teaching, assessment of learning, and instructional design and models and assists others in implementing strategies to improve learning for all children.

An effective school leader understands the manner in which schools improve their performance and facilitates processes that enhance student learning.

Interpersonal

1. An effective school leader is skilled in creating effective working relationships with all constituents who support children's learning.

An effective school leader understands and demonstrates skills essential to mobilizing others for action so the school can make significant gains in the learning of all children.

Intrapersonal

1. An effective school leader articulates a coherent leadership philosophy that supports high student and school performance.

An effective school leader assesses leadership capacities and demonstrates the self-management skills necessary to succeed at the previous five objectives and the overall goal of school transformation.

These six Knowledge Areas function as objectives for the program. Coursework, the principles of instruction and learning followed by faculty and students, revolve around the Knowledge Areas. We have developed a rubric that is cross-referenced with the National Council for Accrediting Teacher Education (NCATE) candidate proficiencies and the Interstate School Leaders Licensing Consortium (ISSLC) Standards for School Leaders that establishes a basis for formative assessment of students and summative assessment of the program (Reeves 2005).

Operationally, The University of Maine program situates students' learning in the "arenas of leadership practice" that school leaders encounter. For example, we ask students to consider "the leader establishing a sense of mission and purpose" or "the leader addressing a supervisory issue with a staff member" or "the leader facilitating a faculty team developing ways to use data for instructional planning." We help students examine these specific arenas by asking generally, "How can leaders engage others so that student learning is enhanced in this school, in this arena?" We then use the six Knowledge Areas as organizers to guide each student's inquiry into the knowledge, interpersonal skills, and intrapersonal dispositions and commitments required of a leader to succeed in the arena.

Ten courses over 3 years dovetail in a developmental sequence designed to generate performance competencies. The students in the cohort program examine their schools, the schools' needs, and its past efforts at school improvement. As they progress through the program, they identify school improvement goals that will ultimately have an impact on student learning. They create an ever-deepening series of Leadership Development Plans (LDPs) that set learning goals and guide learning activities. Individuals regularly revise their plans based on the analysis of their skills and understandings, the evolving needs of the school, feedback they receive from others about their actions, and data indicating how well they are progressing toward their school improvement goals.

This iterative process takes place within the context of several essential programmatic design elements. The large cohort is divided into smaller colleague consulting groups that meet regularly with a faculty member. The school leaders document their growth and the impact of their learning on colleagues and student learning through Organizational Profiles, a process that involves our students in gathering data, analyzing and making some value judgments about how well their school fulfills the major needs and functions of schools as organizations. In addition, they write Leader's Reflections which provide opportunities for students to examine their readiness to take on leadership responsibilities in their schools.

Reflective writing helps students monitor progress implementing their plans, gathering data and feedback, and making a habit of new behaviors. By asking people to step back from the action in their schools, compile thoughts and evidence, make meaning of them, and share their journeys through reflective writing, faculty members can better understand students' motivation and thinking. We then prompt, prod, and explore additional avenues, for productive learning and leadership actions.

Another key element of the program is the Platform of Beliefs. As they do for their LDPs, participants engage in an iterative cycle of learning as they develop and revise Platforms. The two processes, creating and enacting LDPs and developing Platforms, intersect as participants gauge the integration of their beliefs and actions. Students receive both electronic and face-to-face feedback from fellow students and instructors as they draft and redraft these living documents.

Year long courses intertwine cognitive learning with experiences that make the students' contexts and behavioral responses the focal point. We point out inconsistencies, role–play scenarios, urge deeper analysis, and probe motivations. We support the students as they address their leadership challenges while we stretch their thinking or present opposing perspectives. In the final year's capstone experience, cohort members reflect on the extent to which they have grown as leaders by revisiting their LDPs, Leader's Reflections, Organizational Profiles, and Platforms and analyzing the accumulated documentation of their leadership learning.

Two overriding principles of this work deserve mention here, however. First, successful learning requires the enactment of leadership in both simulated and "real school" settings, where interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive knowledge are authentically engaged. Second, faculty need to be skilled in the knowledge of all three dimensions and in the unique manner that learning occurs interpersonally and intrapersonally as well as cognitively (the dimension we are most familiar and comfortable with). We have drawn substantially from the growing body of work on adult learning (andragogy) in our effort to shape our own teaching to meet these challenges.

The next section of this chapter offers a more vivid picture of the above principles as well as the flavor of key program elements from the perspective of faculty and students.

Leadership Learning in Practice: Snapshots of Our Program

Year One: Probing the Anatomy of School Improvement and Leadership

Getting started… and getting grounded. That is what the first year of the cohort is about. The majority of individuals who enter this program of study at the University are classroom teachers, a few are specialists and fewer are administrators, most often assistant principals. So for most of our students their focus has been on

teaching and learning in their classrooms. Some have a limited school-wide perspective usually gained through chairing a committee or being a grade level team leader or department head. Most, however, do not. So, one of the primary goals of the first year is to establish a cognitive foundation focused on a study of schools from an organizational perspective. The second major goal of the first year is to introduce students to many of the leadership development concepts that are central to our view of effective leadership in schools. Students are engaged in the process of learning within these two focus areas with a modicum of "sit and git" and a heavy dose of active learning strategies that not only enrich their own learning but also expose them to techniques they can integrate into their work with colleagues in their own schools.

Four themes or organizational functions form the academic focal points for study throughout the year:

1. Establishing mission and purpose to which people feel committed;
2. Planning, developing and evaluating programs related to student outcomes;
3. Recruiting and building strong working relationships among competent educators; and
4. Building and sustaining a positive sense of community, school climate, and governance system.

Each of these functions is explored from multiple perspectives through a variety of learning activities to better understand how each is critical to a well-functioning school and how leadership is woven throughout each of them. The three essential components mentioned earlier provide the ongoing framework for student learning in Year One: Organizational Profiles, Platforms of Beliefs, and Leader's Reflections. Students are introduced to the expectations for each of these components in the fall, and they become organizational threads that guide each person's learning throughout both semesters of the first year.

The Organizational Profile is a school-based, action-research component of the program. We refer to it as an "audit." Throughout each of the four core functions that we have identified we ask students to investigate various aspects of that function within their own school. Students follow a series of prompts that move them from the collection of relevant documents and information through interviews to an increasingly deeper progression of reflective notes and more exhaustive writing about what they are learning from this raw data. For many, this is the first time they have examined their own workplaces using such a research-based approach. As we progress, they share these findings with one another in their regional groups, an eye-opening experience as they discover taken-for-granted norms for "the way things are done here" versus alternatives they see in the schools of others. A student captured the essence of this process when she wrote:

> I feel as though over the last six weeks of school I have had binoculars on throughout my days at work. I have spoken closely with my principal, other teachers, and members of the community on questions I would not have before taking this class. I have looked at my district and school's mission statement and found examples from those hidden within my building and classrooms. I have thought more carefully about my relationships with the people I work

with and how I share my leadership strengths with them. My journey is far from over but I've been forced to look at things in a different light and under a microscope.

Students draft their Platforms of Beliefs as they examine the four functions of schools as organizations. As faculty we believe that core values and beliefs about schooling, teaching, learning, and leading form the foundation of much of an individual's work in schools. Being able to articulate these beliefs and provide a defensible rationale for them is crucial to supporting the actions of school leaders, especially when challenged. We ask our students to identify their core beliefs in each of the four functions and connect their ideas to professional or research literature that elaborates on or informs their convictions. Cohort members continually revisit these statements to refine them as their understanding deepens, to modify them as they learn, and finally, to connect each of the function-based platforms with one another in a coherent statement that provides a basis for action. As one cohort member stated:

> It is amazing to me when I look back at each of the platforms I have written how strongly I believe in some of these and how others I needed to weed out or mold a little better to my current thinking. I love that I can put down on paper something I truly feel confident about. This has always been a weakness for me; to make a decision about something and feel confident in that I truly feel that way. As I write this paper I hope to see an action plan for myself as an emerging leader. These beliefs will certainly guide me someday in my first principal experience.

The third major component of the first year experience is the Leader's Reflection. As we conclude the study of each of the four functions of schools, students write a reflective narrative in which they examine the findings from their school audits and assess their own leadership competencies within the context of that function using our I–C–I framework for leadership development.

In the final Leader's Reflection students have to come full circle. Early in the fall students were asked to "define what you mean by leadership." Some resort to brief dictionary responses. Many others develop extensive lists of the qualities of effective principals. Only a few see leadership in a more complex manner. They put this writing aside and return to it at the end of the year. In a final reflective narrative we ask students:

- What was your "definition" of leadership at the beginning of the cohort?
- What learning activities have been instrumental in your evolving view of leadership and schools as organizations? How have these influenced your thinking?
- How has your understanding of leadership in schools deepened over the past two semesters? Why? What is your current conceptualization of leadership in schools?

To help examine these functions and the nature of leadership within them we rely on two texts. The primary book that we use to establish the foundation to address our first goal focused on thinking about schools from an organizational perspective is Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal's *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* (2008). To introduce students to our framework for leadership development we use *Becoming Better Leaders: The Challenge of Improving*

Student Learning by Donaldson and Marnik (1995). These are supplemented by a wide variety of additional readings from journals and other books.

In addition to the cognitive resources we share with students, key to the success of the cohort experience are the collegial relationships students develop with one another. To assist in facilitating a learning community dynamic and to demonstrate the high value we place on positive working relationships in schools, we structure the first year in a particular way:

- Whole cohort class sessions are facilitated by either two or three faculty members depending on the number of students enrolled.
- The cohort meets in this large group configuration once a month on a Saturday for a double class session which allows for a greater emphasis on experiential learning activities and cohort-wide sharing.
- Two or three evenings per month students meet in regional groups of approximately 8–10 students with one of the faculty members. We rotate from one group member's school to another which results in the regional group becoming the primary arena for learning.
- Within these various configurations smaller groupings are often used to share experiences through the use of protocols, providing feedback to one another on their writing and school-based research and to engage in role-plays and simulations.

Students' feedback on the program invariably attributes the success of their development to the supportive-yet-challenging environment that results and the relationships spawned by these elements. We deliberately draw attention to the formation of these relationships and to our own facilitative strategies as a "laboratory" for experiencing and studying leadership.

Year One frequently disorients our students initially. They are not being asked to learn passively. On the contrary, they are plunged into examining their own schools, their assumptions about leadership and how it works, and themselves and their capacities to be leaders. They hear many more questions than they hear answers. And they come to understand that leaders are inquirers and collaborators, goal-setters and listeners.

The Groups Course: A Foray into Learning-in-Action

After students spend a year analyzing their school with regard to the four functions of leadership, drafting and redrafting a platform of beliefs, and coming to grips with the I–C–I model of leadership development, we throw them into an experience where they learn about their own leadership from cycles of action and reflection. In the course, "Leading Task Groups in Schools," we divide the cohort arbitrarily into two equal groups (about 10–14 people) with the task of producing something of use to education because it addresses an issue identified as relevant to Maine educators.

We organize the classes into action and debriefing sessions as well as provide some time for the two task groups to discuss readings and compare experiences. Each student signs up to be the facilitator and an observer, which means that they collect and analyze data and lead the debriefing session. Students write reflections after each class session that they can draw on to describe, analyze, and reflect on significant learning about their effective participation, observation, and facilitation of task groups in a final reflective paper which focuses on interpersonal skill development coupled with the intrapersonal awareness they have gained.

From the first class meeting, students plunge into the action and reflection tracks of the course. The content of the course is their performance as leaders, participants, and observers in a task group. They come to see how real this experience is when they encounter conflict around decisions and/or decision-making. The observers find their time outside of the group provides powerful insights into group dynamics as well as the varied participation and leadership styles of their fellow learners. The observers' feedback provides food for thought for the entire group, but it also tends to heighten the awareness of the facilitators of the sessions, especially with regard to how their behavior, tone, body language, speech pattern, to name a few things often noted, affect the work of the group.

Action followed by immediate feedback heightens awareness of behavior and how much one's demeanor influences how the group responds. Class members are sympathetic to the facilitator and want to be supportive, at the same time each person has a vested interest in being involved in the decision-making. As both leaders and participants, they are immersed in the work of the group, yet they do so with raised consciousness from reading about Johari's Window, Heifetz's "getting on the balcony," and the text, Johnson and Johnson'*s Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills* (2006). They wrestle with mundane issues like what to do about absent members, how much involvement the group should have in agenda-setting, and whether minutes are worth keeping. They also have to develop norms and procedures for decision-making and discover how important all of those things are when the group loses focus, communication breaks down, or conflict arises – as surely it must.

Since there are two groups participating in their action/observation sessions separately, conversations between members of the two groups as they compare notes provide another level of self-awareness of the process-product tension as well as the decision-making styles of two groups working toward the same end. Another technique for an individual's analysis of leadership behavior is the *Critical Incident Journal*. We ask students to take a snapshot of an experience and dissect it so they can reflect on it and reconstruct what they might do or will do in the future when confronted by a similar situation.

In a recent Groups course, John was the facilitator of the penultimate session of one group. The group had decided on its product and had been working hard collecting material for the "book" they planned to create to help principals establish good working relationships with staff members. He admits to being over-confident at the outset and here describes both what was happening and what he thought and

felt about it as he attempted to move the group too quickly through what he thought were minor decisions so they could complete the work on the product. He had not adequately assessed where people were in their own anxiety about what was left to do and how much they had not yet agreed on. Before he can reflect and reconstruct, he must confront what happened in the group and the impact on him of his decision to move ahead with the task.

This kind of deconstruction of experience is rich and powerful because students have begun to understand the complex blending of the I–C–I model. The laboratory situation for seeing themselves as leaders and as members of groups *in-action* initiates the deepening of their knowledge of themselves in relationship to others as they extrapolate this knowledge of self to the context of their "real" leadership lives in their schools. They start to grasp how much their behavior is deeply embedded and may or may not comport with their view of themselves. They see and feel how much they are affected by others' words and actions. Using the basic outline of LDPs to guide their learning as group participants, they have the opportunity to practice new behaviors and analyze in-action and on-reflection the implications of personal change. The assignments of the course help them see how to reflect on their leadership just as they have been taught to reflect on their teaching. Such reflection and analysis provides the foundation for further leadership development work in the next 2 years of the cohort experience.

Box 22.1: John's reflections on his facilitation

Here is what happened	Here is what I thought and felt
I modified the agenda so that we would have time to discuss layout issues briefly so that the group work would be more productive.	I thought, wow, let's get over the logistics of the font, size, layout. Let's BRIEFLY discuss the format and get into groups. We don't need any times…that seemed to work before with Genna's facilitation and even though that is something new… the group seemed to respond to it well earlier.
The discussion began and there was ample dialogue going on back and forth between various members of the group. The conversation was trying to "clarify" loose ends dealing with the project. It was like a blur that mixed altogether. People had questions about the title page, power point, mission/ vision page, etc.	I was feeling pressure, a lot if it, to tie up these loose ends before we leave today and thought that we should discuss them so when people are in their work groups they can be thinking about them.

Box 22.1: (continued)

Here is what happened	Here is what I thought and felt
The discussion suddenly took off after font and margins to the title page and other formatting questions that I had not even considered.	Chaos. Anxiety. Scared. Frightened. Overwhelmed. Frustrated. Disappointed. Failure. I felt overwhelmed and kept asking myself, do I intervene? How do I get the group back on track? If I interject and pull in the reins will it be perceived that I am trying to dictate? What did each of the facilitators do before me? What am I doing? These questions are flying through my mind and I am frozen and cannot think. I am thinking of all the different things from the readings, if I say this, how will it be perceived? If I do this, how will it be perceived? What is everyone thinking of me right now? I am failing the group and I don't know what to do? I don't have any time to think and I am in way over my head. I cannot even concentrate and need help. What do I do? When will help arrive? Help!!!!!!!!!!! Relief. Failure.
I can't speak, I don't know what to say. I see it happening… but can't think of a way to intervene appropriately.	Thank god. Help arrived. Dora was asking questions, questions that I should have been asking to give focus. Wasn't it good it is coming from someone in the group other than the facilitator? I am feeling relieved that Dora is asking these questions. I am grateful for her help.
Dora asked for clarifying questions about the project. She asked in bulleted format in a very concise and clear manner in an attempt to tie up loose ends.	

Year Two: Getting on Stage: Learning from Leading a Program Evaluation

The second year of the cohort centers on the leadership and evaluation of educational programs. A learning focus is the leader's skill in helping educators in the school "know that what we say we're doing IS what we're doing – and what we say we want students to learn IS what they're learning." The key components of the course are an introduction to educational research as it pertains to ensuring high quality learning and teaching and a focus on the evaluation and planning of educational programs. These converge in what students often describe as a "leadership-changing" field experience, commonly known as "The Project."

The course's central expectation is that students find a "blind spot" in their school's knowledge base and lead a small program evaluation that will produce meaningful and useful data to their schools that they and their colleagues can use

for planning program improvements. Most students attest, this is much harder than it looks. As one student put it,

> Identifying the "blind spot" was effortless as it was right under my nose and growing from an obscure spot into a deep quarry. As the School Department embarks on its first look at the possibility of adopting an instructional reading program in kindergarten, teachers' fears of the unknown have begun to rise to the surface. Now the teachers line the edges of the reading quarry fearing the unknown. Who will test the water? Do we just dive in? Tensions have flared as discussions about reading instruction have begun and teachers are holding tight to their own beliefs. This is going to test my leadership learning curve!

The Year Two experience emphasizes these leadership roles: a consumer of research and theory, a designer of a program evaluation, and a mobilizer of others with the goal of evaluating and improving practices that relate to student learning. At the heart of these objectives are two complementary and distinctive questions: How does my school learn? And, how do I, as a leader, learn? The first question stresses the responsibility school leaders have for taking the "long view" of a school's programs. Our students compare what an educational program is attempting to do with what the program is actually accomplishing. Students are introduced to the program, planning and evaluation cycle – the process of thinking about what a school's programs should be, monitoring how well they work, and improving them through planning and adjustment of practice. One student offered this insight into his school.

> I once read a book with my children that accurately described my feelings about my school. The book was *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. So I thought about a current initiative that our school has been working on for the past three years; literacy. The Jekylls were easy to identify: These people are on the Literacy Team and the shared belief is that literacy should be taught in all content areas. The Hydes were also easy to identify: These people feel that literacy is not their job to teach. They feel they don't have the time to teach it and it will "take-away" from the content they need to teach. They don't emphasize literacy in their classroom and generally don't demonstrate the importance to their students. Categorizing was the easy part. Now I needed to dig deeper. Why is our school like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde when it comes to openness of new ideas? Who is stronger: Jekyll or Hyde? What gives the stronger people their power? How do my biases influence my judgments and effectiveness as a leader?

The questions this student raises places him at the intersection of the three dimensions of leadership listed above – consumer, designer, mobilizer. Cohort relationships generated in Years One and Two help each student come to grips with these very questions. Small Colleague Critic Groups (CCGs) of four serve as supporters, resource persons, and critical questioners for cohort members in reconciling how they "learn" about themselves as leaders. The CCGs become increasingly important learning labs where students provide one another with deeper understanding of the work of planning and evaluation as well as their leadership development by consulting productively and cultivating critical reflections in and on action. Another student described the complexity of his learning:

> As Popeye once said, "I am what I am, and that's all that I am." I cannot dissect portions of my personality to accommodate success, I must be aware of how the components of my personality may affect a process, and then be able to adjust to the situation. I like to listen,

and I believe I am developing a skill at listening both to what people are saying as well as what is not being said. My group is helping me see this. I have gotten pretty adept at identifying undercurrents. When I have gotten to know people I find it possible to know with reasonable certainty that what they are talking about is not what they want to say.

In Year Two, while the LDP plays an increasingly prominent and critical role in students' learning, especially in the interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions, the program evaluation Project becomes the major vehicle for planning and performing leadership in students' schools and for examining and reflecting on students' skills and knowledge as leaders. The Project is designed as an experiential learning activity. Students must identify a program at their school as the object of evaluation and planning activities aimed primarily at student learning outcomes. The plan must involve other staff members, have goals related to improved student outcomes and be amenable to leadership from the student. Their leadership becomes more conscious and real for students through the dawning expectation that they are responsible for actually leading a process of genuinely engaging their school in learning about its effectiveness, about new ways to perform, and adopting and actually using some of those new ways. The Project integrates a number of leadership elements: deciphering the actual nature of an educational program, determining the key constituencies, understanding past evaluations, setting norms within a group and articulating roles, justifying why a program is expected to produce a desired outcome, being a savvy observer, and learning to ask the hard questions of colleagues.

For many students, the Project places them in the shoes of a leader for the first time. The potential for learning in all three I–C–I domains typically skyrockets. One student captured it this way.

I am experimenting with leadership strategies and tactics due to the focus of the project and my LDP. I feel I am developing a different mental model of our school and that our school is holding itself back from becoming a good school.… I started this course by placing blame on people not open to change. Trying to prove myself as being right instead of trying to improve my organization. But once I started to question my own assumptions about people who I perceived to be closed to change, I began to realize that I was wrong and that my mental model was flawed. Each and every person has their reasons for resisting change whether it is a mindless precedent, being left out of the decision-making process, or if they have observed opportunities to reinforce their mindless precedents.

What I have realized is that there is opportunity, by challenging everyone's assumptions, to change the culture at our school. I expect that this change will involve conflict, failure (it will get worse before it gets better), learning, and then opportunity. Hard to admit that I have been wrong in my thinking. The next step is having the courage to challenge other's assumptions.

Year Two provides many opportunities for students to look deeply into the convergence of the I, C, and I skills and knowledge in their own leadership practice as well multiple occasions to rehearse in real time what they will be doing in their schools. Reality is the best teacher as it offers powerful leadership learning contexts for students in their schools and in their CCGs. Critical questions begin to emerge: How comfortable am I initiating a project/evaluation with my colleagues? How well can I keep my team organized? What do I do to optimize my team's commitment to

this project? How do I reconcile my leadership with the school's administration? How do I feel about my expanded sphere of leadership? And, most important, how does this taste of leadership incline me toward more (or less) of this kind of experience? These questions serve as the foundation for Year Three where the cohort members, specifically in the CCGs, journey more deeply into each other's leadership lives.

Year Three: Going Live: Deepening Performance Skills Together

Our program introduces students to "learning by doing" right from the outset. In Years One and Two, they role-play; they participate in extended simulations where interpersonal and cognitive skills can develop; and they perform leadership in their schools by facilitating the evaluation of an instructional program. But in Year Three, the major focus of our students' learning is on a leadership role they assume at their school. The ingredients for learning in this third year are the responsibility to lead an effort to improve student learning at school; the creation of a LDP with goals designed to enhance performance; regular written reflection and reading focusing on the leadership role and its challenges; and membership in a colleague-critic group of three other students and one faculty member. Meeting every 2–3 weeks and exchanging electronic reflections, the CCGs function as coaches for their members. Our feedback from students and specifically from the 2008 program evaluation reveal these groups to be one of the most powerful learning mediums of the entire cohort program. The success of CCGs at both supporting risk-taking and challenging individuals' assumptions and thinking explains why critical friend relationships frequently continue past the conclusion of the program as students maintain the connections established in the cohort and as they seek out similar relationships among colleagues at school.

Although we still hold whole cohort sessions, faculty members become conveners, observers, and, to a certain extent, members of the CCGs as they become the arena for the most significant learning. Recently one of us was the faculty facilitator for a CCG that included Hannah, Nicki, Louis, and Bea. The group always met from four to seven in a town located centrally for these four and we always included food, drink, and some "reconnect" time that helped to reinforce our norms of safety and trust. One evening, Nicki, a teacher whose leadership project was to develop a literacy intervention team in her elementary school, was struggling to understand a meeting she had led the previous day.

> "I got soooo angry at Leonard," she said. "I mean, he continues to throw roadblocks in our way every time we meet. The others [3 other teachers] are fine… I mean, Rhonda is really on board, and Sue and Thelma will go along even if they don't fully get what we're doing at first".
>
> The CCG, as one, lean toward Nicki, keenly attending both to her frustration and to her description of Leonard. Hannah speaks first. "You've been wondering about Leonard all along, Nicki. Why did he volunteer to join this team anyway?"

I don't really know! He's the Title I teacher, so this is right up his alley! Maybe he thought it was his obligation to be part of it…. From the way he's acting, he's pretty clueless about literacy intervention! I mean, we've been using some great techniques in these little in-class groupings…

Louis jumps in, "And what's Leonard doing with these? Is he using them, too? Is he on-board with your committee's work plan?"

"Well, you know, I've been wondering that too," Nicki responds. "He's been pulling kids out of class for so long, tutoring them and whatnot, I'm not seeing a lot different in what he's doing in his small groups."

Bea joins the line of questioning. "Do you suppose he's feeling threatened at all? I mean, you're asking him to get on board with some literacy practices that he hasn't used. They're coming from you and the other teachers, not from him. And it's his job to know this kind of stuff."

And the faculty member adds, "From the way you've been describing him in your journals and here, Nicki, his behavior – the roadblocking – sure looks like he's feeling threatened by this."

"How could he be threatened?" Nicki exclaims. "He's been teaching here *forever*. He knows *everybody*! And I've prepared all these materials and laid it all out for the committee so clearly! How could he NOT get it?"

"But listen to what you're saying, Nicki," Hannah offers. "He's not buying into this program that you've been working so hard at organizing. The harder you try, the more he seems to be dragging his feet… and the more frustrated you're getting."

Louis adds, "Yeah. It seems like one of those downward spirals we've been talking about where the leader sees staff resisting, she tries hard to tell them what they should be doing, but they resist even more…"

"Well, that is how I'm feeling," Nicki ponders. "But I don't seem to be able to break through to him."

The whole group pauses, thinking about Nicki's remark. She has, with their help, turned the lens away from Leonard for the moment and is beginning to examine her feelings and the way she has been "leading" him. I ask Nicki, "Can you tell us more about how you interact with Leonard, what your approach to him is in meetings?"

She answers, "Well, you know, I'm not usually talking directly with him in meetings. Mostly, it's me and Rhonda and sometimes Thelma who are doing the talking, developing the plans. And usually I'm thinking, 'I wonder when Leonard is going drop his next bomb on us?'"

Hannah observes, "So in your leadership of Leonard, you're saying that you're not directly engaging with him as an individual? You seem to be saying almost that you're avoiding rather than confronting…"

Nicki sits back. The group again pauses for her to ponder Hannah's observation. She sighs, her expression relaxes, and a small smiles creeps across her face: "God, Hannah, you've done it again! You've seen what I haven't been able to see. Yes, I'm just expecting Leonard to do what we've developed. I can't see any reason he shouldn't. And when he hasn't, I've tried giving him very specific plans and materials… I guess I've just hoped that he'd get swept along by the other four of us."

Louis adds, "So, you haven't thought about sitting down with him one-on-one and asking him how he sees what's going on?"

"Oh, yes, I've *thought* about it," Nicki answers, "I just didn't think it would work. I didn't think I could say anything different to him that I haven't already said fifteen times."

Louis persists, "But I'm talking about listening to him, hearing what he thinks about the literacy practices you've developed, hearing if he has problems with any of them… or anything to add from his perspective."

As Nicki entertains Louis's suggestion, the group helps her examine her style of interaction with Leonard and then to explore ways she might change her approach in order to "hear"

Leonard more clearly. Nicki notes that she's always found it easier to avoid confronting people and even states, "I'm beginning to see that as a school leader, you're stuck with the staff you have and you've got to confront the fact that some of them won't be doing things the way you think they should."

From here, the CCG help Nicki develop a very specific strategy to sit down with Leonard one-on-one. Louis briefly role-plays Leonard, trying to portray him as accurately as he can, given the many details that Nicki has shared. And Nicki tries out the strategy the group has developed with her. Then we all assess how it went. And Nicki leaves our CCG meeting with a plan to alter her leadership performance at school, starting the very next day.

In this fashion, our CCGs give each member regular opportunities to share experiences and challenges from their leadership practice. The "substance" of their learning is virtually their own performance – as well as the leadership performance of their three CCG colleagues. As a small learning community, we bring to bear on these "real life episodes" the concepts, skills, and insights developed earlier in the Cohort. And, perhaps most important, we serve as coaches to one another in the development of new skills and insights that can make each member (including the faculty member!) a better leader in the future.

The intensive immersion in leadership experience in Year Three concludes with a prolonged reflection over the 3 years of the program. Guided by the rubric framing the six Knowledge Areas, students work with faculty and colleagues to draw together an assessment of their assets and continuing challenges in the six areas. We require that this assessment be supported by evidence from past journals and Leader Reflections, from observations and feedback from colleagues at school and in the cohort and from faculty, and from documents demonstrating the impacts they have had as leaders in their schools. As part of the Leadership Portfolios, students explore leadership roles they might be more (or less) ready for. And we faculty focus our facilitation of the cohort sessions around the relationships within the cohort (and between students and ourselves) so that they may be sustained into the future to support each leader in her or his career.

Questions We Continue to Ask

"What is the meaning of it, Watson?" said Holmes, solemnly, as he laid down the paper. It must tend to some end, or else our universe is ruled by chance, which is unthinkable. But what end? There is the great standing perennial problem to which human reason is as far from an answer as ever. (The Cardboard Box, Arthur Conan Doyle)

The theoretical framework for leadership knowledge described in this chapter has grown steadily from our practice – from experimentation in our courses and professional development experiences as well as from our reading and discussing the increasingly diverse and rich leadership literature. Our learning framework has been through many refinements as we have used it to shape learning experiences and our own andragogical roles in the service of leadership development. While our practical theorizing has freed us as faculty to take an experiential, experimental

approach to leadership learning through carefully chronicling impacts and outcomes in the growth that has taken place in our students, the model has not provided us the security of being easily predictable and measurable.

As the Carnegie Foundation is finding in its work on professional learning (Sullivan and Rosin 2008), we have been challenged by the exciting work of re-casting this graduate learning experience so that, as our students move through the program, they develop knowledge, relational skills, and self-awareness. The rewards have been substantial. We witness the evolution of greater sophistication in thought and in action. We share through response-journaling the clarification of professional values and the formation of a new sense of confidence. We see our student-colleagues wrestling with new communication or facilitation skills in role-plays. And, most importantly, we see them integrating what they have come to know with what they believe is right as they actively lead important work in their schools.

We are, as always, chasing after greater certainty that through these learning experiences in this developmental medium our students' competencies are, in fact, growing. And, although we press our students to look in their schools for tangible evidence of their effectiveness as leaders, we are ever aware of the daunting task of connecting our learning about our own teaching to our students' impact on their students' learning. Our ongoing work together will continue to revolve around the following questions:

- Can leadership be taught?
- Can ALL students learn leadership through the I–C–I model?
- How do we know our students are leading learning?

Can Leadership Be Taught?

Leadership is hard to teach. The design elements we have employed in teaching leadership, as shared in this chapter, are intended to help our students acquire the kinds of skills we believe are essential to practicing leadership competently in the real world of schools. A recurring underlying tension in our explorations of the I–C–I model is the extent to which we are able to operationalize the model not only as a framework for leadership knowledge and learning but also as a systematic set of teaching practices conducted by leadership faculty for the purposes of student learning. If leadership can be learned through the I–C–I framework, then how do the approaches we have described here represent a genuine andragogy, an art and a science for helping adults learn?

Since the inception of the program we have fashioned ourselves coaches of leadership development (rather than instructors), supporting risk-taking, promoting learning from mistakes and celebrating successes in our students. In interpreting the role of coach, we at various times become colleague-critics, consultants, and windows through which our students may reflect on themselves and their leadership practices (Mackenzie and Marnik 2008). Nevertheless we are sometimes brought

up short in our own conversations when asked to pinpoint precisely what we think we do to help our students learn.

In designing challenging contexts in our courses such as the "Groups Course," through role-plays and simulations, or in the "Project" in the Year Two, in which students are placed intentionally in dialogue with different people at their schools, encountering conflicting points of view, we seek to mirror the larger fields of leadership action in which our students will find themselves. In doing so, we come face-to-face with new roles for ourselves wherein where we not only provide access to key ideas and frameworks but through which our own conscious modeling of leadership behaviors becomes critical. These roles continue to require of us new teaching skills and abilities whether in the art and craft of analyzing and providing feedback on a LDP or decoding the often tangled and complex group contexts in which we have placed our students. We constantly explore our own competence in shaping norms in classrooms, holding the tensions of a group, and understanding the powers of the group to teach and learn in contexts which invite complicated relational engagement. Such an approach requires extreme care in making safe and hospitable environments for learning leadership. At the heart of all of these new skill sets for faculty, we believe, lies our willingness to submit to self-scrutiny and a responsibility to make good judgments "in situ" in relationship to the real leadership experiences of our students. Who we are as teachers determines much about what is being learned and not learned in our work to establish the I–C–I model as a legitimate andragogy.

Can ALL Students Learn Leadership Through the I–C–I Model?

The I–C–I model we have described in this chapter is one approach to learning leadership. As a singular approach it raises the question whether it works for everyone. What makes the I–C–I compelling for us and many of our students is the synergy among the three domains where interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive knowledge are authentically engaged. Indeed, cognitive learning as well as interpersonal and intrapersonal learning need not be viewed as discrete realms. However, as a performance learning model it requires that learners find their own places of readiness and integration of learning at moments in time and place throughout the program as is evident from the selected vignettes we include here. Performance learning cannot be codified and imposed. Thus we rarely find students who have integrated all of the interdependent elements of this model at one time in their practice. And, it is likely that a number of our students leave our program with partial strengths in some of the I–C–I knowledge domains.

For most participants, based on our research on our program, we find the program works. But it requires, at the deepest level of commitment, an openness to learning about oneself, that is, an ability to be public and honest about the nature of one's leadership. It means being able to answer the question, "How is *my* leadership going?" at different points in time and in increasingly concrete and sophisticated

ways. This approach also requires that our students allow themselves to become vulnerable, sometimes perilously so, in relationship to their work, their colleagues, and themselves. As faculty we try to make talking about one's leadership learning, in this sense, a normative and safe process. However, students' willingness to explore "how leading works for me in my school" (Donaldson 2008) is difficult, untidy, and likely not for everyone. In spite of our efforts, some students resist or, perhaps, are unable to commit to the degree of self-examination required in our model. Some balk at the interpersonal dimension, others at the intrapersonal, and a few at both. Inversely related is the phenomenon that cohorts and small-team learning groups can grow groupthink; they can stifle individuality and diverse conceptions of leadership which can also impede students' willingness to examine their own leadership.

In sum, it is fair to say that all of our students find our program demanding while not everyone in our program becomes adept at reflection through the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal lenses. A central challenge in continuing to understand and experiment with our approach will be to help all of our students be more willing to look at the essential question: How do *I* really know that I am growing as a leader?

How Do We Know Our Students Are Leading Learning?

Since the inception of our program, we have engaged in a variety of research and assessment efforts to gauge our students' growth in leadership performance and thus assess our students' learning (Mackenzie et al. 2007, 2008). Collectively, we have written and published widely in pursuing a variety of lines inquiry related to the essential question: How do we know our students are leading? (Donaldson et al. 2009a, b; Donaldson et al. 2004; Mackenzie and Marnik 2004). The cumulative results of this action research have significance for other programs that seek to evaluate leader learning and certainly learning of the performance competencies such as those outlined in our I–C–I model of leader knowledge. However, a number of aspects of the leadership-assessment process continue to haunt us and deserve mention here. One is the endemic challenge in tracking leaders' impacts on students through their work with staff members. The other is that impacts, particularly in the interpersonal and intrapersonal realm, on students are difficult to measure.

We have relied on three primary sources of evidence in evaluating our program: student self-observations, impacts on students and programs, and impacts on staff and colleagues (Donaldson 2008). Much of these data are mined, narratively and anecdotally, through some of the I–C–I design elements the chapter has described: LDPs, Leader's Reflections, Organizational Profiles, and Platforms of Belief. These go through further refinement by means of debriefing experiences in CCG and Taking Stock sessions where students continue to bring evidence of impacts in order to help one another assess leader effects. While these data sources provide ongoing monitoring of leader effects particularly in the interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions, we find they can often be as untidy and messy to our students as they are to us in evaluating and understanding their influence on student learning.

Our ongoing examination of these effects always raises questions and issues for us as evaluators of our program regarding what "counts" as real leadership knowledge or as a competency to be assessed. In our ongoing conversations, it is a constant challenge for us to uniformly capture and agree upon what rises to the level of "evidence" of leadership learning particularly in the interpersonal and intrapersonal domains of our model. Acquiring professional competence, from this perspective, means teaching our students how to read and use their ambient awareness of themselves and others in order to better understand their own actions and to develop a perspective for evaluating and changing, when necessary, their own practices.

Competence, then, is learning to become reflective in practice so that new theories of action and practice can continually be tested in the actual work of their leadership. This kind of learning deserves celebration whenever it appears, but it is not necessarily the kind of knowledge canned and stored in the reserves of what is considered to be leadership wisdom and expected behaviors. Each of our students' works amid a different set of leadership contexts and relationships. As our students become the authors of their own experience, we as faculty must continue to consider and question what genuine standards are becoming enacted through our program and what values are embodied in the I–C–I model as knowledge domains for school leaders. We believe it is important that we stay focused on the *evidence* of the learning by the growth that takes place in the students in our cohort as well as the myriad ambiguities and questions the work of leadership raises for them.

Final Thoughts

This chapter has described the Interpersonal–Cognitive–Intrapersonal (I–C–I) model of leadership knowledge as well as some of the learning methods we have developed to match the particularities of the knowledge bases that make up leadership performance. The chapter has argued that the interpersonal complexities of the workplace represent a critical and neglected frontier of leadership development in which to engage learners' leadership practice from the onset of their formal preparation. Over the years we have been involved in our exploration of the I–C–I model, we have worked to ensure the model consistently meets two practical criteria: it would apply clearly to the contexts of schools, readily making sense to aspiring and practicing educational leaders and it would translate fluidly into a system of learning, readily applicable to the developmental experience of school leaders seeking to grow in competence and performance.

These criteria have led to a willingness on our part and our students to discover the principles of the I–C–I model as it has gone along. We have come to regard our students' learning in the three intersecting dimensions of leadership knowledge – the interpersonal, the cognitive, and the intrapersonal – as complementary perspectives on fundamental processes of leadership learning and growth. Learning in all three dimensions of the I–C–I model is a demanding process and asks a great deal of students and especially teachers. We believe it has helped us to bridge the gulf

between University and practice, between theory and performance, and between teacher and student providing a generative understanding of what shapes and enables the real work of leaders.

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Chapter 23
Educating Leaders for Learning in Schools in Kenya: The Need for a Reconceptualisation

Julius O. Jwan and Charles O. Ong'ondo

Introduction

In all organizations, leadership is a crucial ingredient – if not the most important – for the attainment of the stated goals. In educational institutions, learning is normally the main goal. For learning of any kind to be attained, there needs to be sound leadership. Nevertheless, in some educational contexts, the relationship between leadership and learning is commonly not emphasised; that is, leaders are (generally) neither educated for leadership nor prepared to draw connections between leadership and learning. For example, in Kenya, leadership and learning are conceptualised as different entities, not as two inseparable parts of a whole. That is, the leadership functions of school principals are always considered in terms of management of finances, teaching and non-teaching and school resources – usually without consideration of how these management functions are interlinked with learning in schools. On the other hand, learning is viewed as a process that aims mainly at enabling the students to pass their national exams – hardly as an activity that ought to prepare the learners for leadership functions both in school and the wider Kenyan (and global) society.

In this chapter, we discuss the education of school leaders in Kenya in relation to learning needs in Kenyan schools. In the first section, we review contemporary conceptualisations of school leadership and learning and how these link into perspectives on leadership for learning. The second section looks at the context – paying attention to both policy and practice based on a study conducted in Kenya which focussed on perceptions of democratic school leadership.

To begin, we attempt broader definitions of the terms leadership, learning and leadership for learning. In discussing the conceptions of school leadership, we attempt to relate it to terms such as management which, as we highlight later in this chapter, dominates the school principals' discourse in Kenya.

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School Leadership

Defining leadership in any categorical way has proved "both difficult and, perhaps, unnecessary" (Goddard 2003:13) because there is no agreed definition and it overlaps with two similar terms: management and administration (Bush 2003). These concepts are often used in different contexts to refer broadly to the same area of study and practice (Dimmock 2002; Coleman 2005). Historically, the development of education management drew heavily on several more firmly established disciplines including sociology, political science, economics and general management (Bush 2003). Bush observes that in the latter part of the twentieth century the emphasis on management very much reflected the business world, and its use in education formed part of "policy borrowing" at the time. Currently, "management" is widely used in Britain, Europe and Africa, whilst "administration" is preferred in the USA, Canada and Australia (Bush 2003, 2008a).

Bush (2008a:276) identifies three main characteristics of leadership which are interrelated and which we find suitable in our discussion. These are:

- Leadership as influence.
- Leadership and values.
- Leadership and vision.

Influence

Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional control is exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or groups) to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation. Bush (2003, 2008a) observes that this widely accepted summary includes several key elements:

- The central concept is influence rather than authority.

Both of these are dimensions of power but the latter tends to reside in formal positions, such as that of headteacher, whilst the former could be exercised by anyone in the school or college. In this sense, leadership is independent of positional authority whilst management is linked directly to it. Therefore, there is need to "depersonalize leadership from individuals and relocate it as a function of, and within, organizations" (Bennett and Anderson 2003:3). In many educational settings, however, leaders are often taken to be those in formally appointed role positions, as well as informal positions, who exercise influence and provide direction to their colleagues (Bottery 2004).

- The process is intentional

The person seeking to exercise influence is doing so in order to achieve certain purposes (Bush 2008a). Thus, as Anderson (2003) emphasises, the definitions

of leadership convey the idea of identifying a future state that is desired for the organisation as well as ways in which it can improve and move forward to this point. Managing on the other hand is about:

> The actual process of moving the organisation along the path towards identified vision and involves putting structures and procedures in place and, then, enacting them through the people within the organisation to achieve improvement (Anderson 2003:14).

Therefore, an effective leader must not only have an ability to identify the appropriate development path for the organisation but also have the skills that enable him or her to encourage the people to follow.

Goddard (2003:13) advances a similar argument that leading is "the act of working with a group of individuals to achieve communal goals". There is no official authority in place and people listen to those with the best ideas, "not those with the biggest name tag" (p. 13). In this sense, leadership is a function in that it is only present when it is being exercised. Thus, as Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) argue, the most fundamental theoretical explanations for the importance of direction-setting practices on the part of leaders are goal-based theories of human motivation. They observe that according to such theories, people are motivated by goals which they find personally compelling as well as challenging but achievable.

- Another element of influence that Bush (2008a) highlights is that it may be exercised by groups as well as individuals.

Bush notes that this aspect of leadership portrays it as a fluid process, potentially emanating from any part of the school, independent of formal management positions and capable of residing within any member of the school, including associate staff and students. Møller (2009), giving an example of a study conducted in the three Scandinavian countries, also points out that in Norway school leadership is seen as a joint function of the leadership team and the teachers are expected to take significant responsibilities and decisions in their everyday class-related work as well.

In this sense, leadership is seen as a relationship between individuals in which influence and power is evenly distributed on a legitimate basis (Fiedler and Chemers 1974). These writers observe that first, the power may be given to the leader by the consent of the group member(s), by a contractual work agreement, or by law, but it is for the leader to exercise. This means that there can be no leaders in isolation. If one wants to know whether one is a leader there should be people to be led (Anderson 2003) and followers must explicitly or implicitly consent to their part in this influence relationship by relinquishing their right to make certain independent decisions (Fiedler and Chemers 1974). Woods (2004) expresses a similar view that leadership is not merely exercised through the actions of the leaders per se, but the interactions between leaders and other agents. He maintains that leadership is "an influencing relation" between leaders and followers that takes place in situations that can be described by their tools, routines and structures.

In schools, Riley (2003:129) emphasises that school leadership is "an organic activity, dependent on interrelations and connections" where school principals are only one source of leadership, albeit a critical one. Teachers, governors and pupils

all contribute to the leadership of a school. Moos (2008) summarises this view in a more succinct manner when he notes that there is an understanding that school principals cannot be sufficiently informed to make all decisions in schools, nor can they be present in all places and situations where decisions need to be made and therefore some decisions must be made by the teachers, and at times, by students as well as governors. School leadership, therefore, like any other type of leadership, requires a sense of understanding and involvement of students, teachers, the governing council and the local community to achieve its goals (Leithwood 2006).

Values

Leadership is increasingly linked with values and leaders are expected to ground their actions in clear personal and professional values (Bush 2008a). Giving the example of England, Bush points out that in England the dominant values and policies are those of government and that they are "imposed" on school leaders. He contends that in such a context, the scope for leaders to act according to their own values is circumscribed by central power. Bush maintains that in such circumstances leaders are free to pursue their own values, but only if they are consistent with government policies.

Vision

Bush (2003, 2008a) argues that vision is regarded as an essential component of effective leadership. He explains that outstanding leaders have a vision for their organizations and they are motivated to work hard because their leadership is the pursuit of their individual visions. That is:

> Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision (Bush 2003:8).

Leithwood and Jantzi (2008:507) share a similar view that a critical aspect of leadership involves helping members of a group to develop shared understandings about the organization and its activities and goals that can undergird a sense of purpose or vision. They assert that to the extent that visions are inspirational, they should foster those emotional arousal processes antecedent to the development of efficacy beliefs.

Based on these three pillars for a conceptualisation of leadership (influence, values and vision), we thus consider leadership to mean a higher order set of tasks such as goal setting, visioning and motivating, whilst we view management as an aspect of leadership at a lower level concerned with maintenance of performance

through supervision, coordination and control (Dimmock 2002). Leadership is "not only a process geared towards the attainment of desired purposes but also involves inspiring and supporting others towards the achievement of visions for the school that is based on clear personal and professional values" (Bush and Glover 2003:10). On the other hand, Bush and Glover view school management as the implementation of school policies and the efficient and effective maintenance of the school's activities. Coleman (2005) explains that one can be a leader without being a manager and the other way round. For example, one can fulfil many of the symbolic, inspirational educational and normative functions of a leader and thus represent what an organisation stands for without carrying out any of the formal functions of management. Conversely, one can monitor and control organisational activities, make decisions, and allocate resources without fulfilling the symbolic, normative, inspirational, or educational functions of leadership (Bottery 2004; Coleman 2005; Strain 2009).

Nevertheless, Bush (2008a) questions whether school leaders are able to develop a specific vision for their schools, given government prescriptions about curriculum aims and content. This question is important to our discussion on the Kenyan context where the Ministry of Education, not only provides the curriculum and the syllabus, but also provides a service charter that contains its values, vision, and mission (Republic of Kenya 2007). All provincial and district education officers, as well as schools, are then expected to develop their own strategic plans based on the one from the Ministry of Education.

In this chapter, we use the term "leadership" in a broad sense that includes the management functions of school principals. This helps capture the various practices undertaken by principals and teachers in the schools. Next, we briefly review the definition(s) of the term "learning", and then state how we use it in this chapter. We shall refer both to learning in teacher education institutions and learning in schools.

Learning

The term learning has been defined differently by various writers. Indeed, as Illeris (2009:1) points out: "learning is a very complex matter, and there is generally no accepted definition of the concept". Thus, the concept of learning is understood in multiple and subtly different ways by both researchers and the participants of research investigations (see Colley et al. 2002; Pegg 2007). The different definitions of learning have been influenced by the theoretical orientations of the definers. Generally, there are three main theories that have influenced the definitions and practices of learning in different educational contexts: behaviourist, constructivist and socio-cultural. There are many other variants or combinations of these theories and in some programmes a mixture of these views is discernible.

To begin with, there is the behaviourist view which has its background in behaviourist psychology where learning is defined as "lasting behaviour change" and

habit formation. Learning was perceived to take place by external conditioning and reinforcement by use of "rewards and denials or conditioning" (Roberts 1998:35). According to this theory, target behaviour is broken down into components that can be quantified and measured. In the behaviourist mode, the primary focus of teacher education, therefore, is to equip student teachers with techniques that are thought to provide the best results in leadership and teaching (e.g. Malderez and Wedell 2007; Zeichner 2006; Kumaravadivelu 2003; Korthagen 2001; Johnson 1999; Roberts 1998). This theory is currently considered a narrow view of teacher education because it assumes that there is a "best practice" that everyone should be following and that can be objectively assessed through observation of teacher behaviour (and exam results). It has been observed that "good teaching is not just a matter of displaying a certain set of behaviours, since in any case, perceptions of 'correct behaviours' change as new theories of learning emerge" (Malderez and Wedell 2007:14). Nonetheless, behaviourism is also said to have served some useful purposes in teacher education and learning. One contribution is that it makes it possible to break down content into clear tasks for learning, in an orderly manner (Roberts 1998).

Another view of learning is constructivism, where the main tenet is that people can learn by constructing and reconstructing their own interpretations from knowledge that they are presented with and these interpretations differ from one individual to another. This reconstruction is dependent upon the learners' expectations, prior knowledge and present thinking. According to constructivists, learning activities ought to enable the learners to make their own sense of the content and skills offered to them and to review and improve their understanding during the learning process (Roberts 1998). Some of the constructivist views of teacher learning have been criticised for failing to take into consideration the communal and participative elements in teacher learning. Some critics have accused the constructivists of focussing on "inner processes and therefore abstracts the person from the socio-cultural landscape in which they live and work" (Roberts 1998:28).

The third general view of learning – the socio-cultural view – largely draws from the works of Vygotsky (1978, 1987), particularly the notion of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which posits that learning occurs through social interaction with adults and more capable peers through mediated social practice (Hawkins 2004). Thus, "learning is viewed as a situated activity… and mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the socio-cultural practices of the community" (Lave and Wenger 1991:29). This view also posits that learning (for example learning to teach) is a process of creating a social identity and the effects of a teacher's prior socialisation – as shown in their perceptions – need to be attended to. Teaching is a social apprenticeship and teachers need to be educated to be responsible to the society and sensitive to social inequalities (Roberts 1998; Hawkins 2004; Grant and Gillette 2006). The socio-cultural view of learning does not necessarily seek to dismiss or disapprove other views but reiterates the need to consider that learning is not an individual enterprise but is largely governed by and intricately related to socio-cultural circumstances of the communities in which the learning takes place (Lave and Wenger 1991; Intrator 2006).

From the views of learning presented above, it is clear that, as we stated earlier, there is neither a universal definition nor approach to learning. What is perhaps generally agreed upon by most theorists is that learning is no longer simply viewed as the getting of knowledge and skills but more broadly to include encountering abilities, emotions, cultures and perhaps more importantly, reasoning. For our purposes in this chapter, we shall work with the definition by Tomlinson (1995:9) that learning is development "of capacities or tendencies through action or experience… capacities, especially from educational institutions, are concepts, knowledge/understanding and skills… attitudes and tendencies. Teaching of whatever kind is generally intended to end up with some learning of the pupils" (p. 9).

In essence, we do not subscribe to the school of thought that suggests that learning is only evident in changed behaviour because it is possible that some experiences could enhance awareness and/or reasoning while behaviour may remain the same, due to various reasons within the context of the learner. Thus, when we look for evidence of learning we often return to the idea of knowledge as a resource, something that has been developed by the learner, whereas evidence of knowledge may only emerge as the context changes for an individual or over the long term.

Leadership for Learning

From our review of the terms leadership and learning above, we define leadership for learning as the exercise of influence, values and vision for the development of desirable, relevant and appropriate knowledge in terms of awareness, capacities, perceptions and reasoning. It also encompasses learning to lead as part of an established career progression pattern, from being a student in school, through being a student teacher to appointment as a principal. This requires the government and, indeed, school leaders to put in place mechanisms that enable teachers to undergo training that could equip them with relevant leadership skills (learning) alongside what they learn at their work places.

That notwithstanding, as Pegg (2007) observes, questions are always raised on the appropriateness of "what" and "how" leaders learn. Pegg notes that the question is important because it is assumed that the learning done by educational leaders impacts positively on their schools and the learners – both children and adults. She notes that research into school leaders' learning starts from the premise that such learning will inform practice, ultimately to help children learn more effectively.

We, therefore, support the view that educating school leaders cannot be left to chance (Bush 2008b). Drawing on an assessment conducted by Leithwood et al. (2006) in the UK, Bush emphasises that leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning, which leads to the need for principals and senior staff to undertake specific preparation for the distinctive role of educational leadership and management. Bush (2008b) argues that the once widely accepted view that teaching qualifications and experience alone provide a sufficient basis for school leaders is gradually being replaced by an understanding that headship is a specialist

position that requires a different set of skills from those essential for classroom teachers. However, this does not suggest that teachers should not be leaders in their classrooms – only the levels of leadership differ. Nevertheless, Bush' argument underlies the need for educating school leaders for their specialist roles.

Indeed as Bennett and Anderson (2003:1) emphasise, the importance of leadership in the management and administration of educational organizations and systems is "reflected in both academic and educational policy statements throughout the English-speaking world". Thus, educating school leaders has been a major concern in many countries in an attempt to raise standards in education and to engineer a "step change" in the nature of school leadership. In England, for example, this is seen by the establishment of the National College for School Leadership (NCL) in 2000 for training school principals based on the change from individual school headship to system change. There is an emphasis on learning to lead for a new type of schooling: federated schools, extended schools, collaborative management teams (also see Bennett and Anderson 2003; Anderson 2003). Similarly, countries as diverse as Canada, France, Singapore, South Africa and the USA have introduced, or are piloting, mandatory qualifications for new school principals (Bush 2008b). In the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, Møller (2009) explains that educating school leaders is now grounded in the view that school leadership should promote democracy as a fundamental social value and ethical guide to citizenship. She emphasises that the conception of school leadership has changed from the "old primus inter pares (first among equals) to being framed as a profession distinct from teaching" (p. 171).

In Kenya, there is no specialised training for principals and they are selected based on experience in the field as teachers. Appointment of principals is sometimes based on political and ethnic considerations (Harber 2002; Republic of Kenya 1999, 2001). Therefore, how the school principals, who themselves have had no formal leadership training, relate their leadership to learning remains a matter of concern. This is because the in-service courses the principals attend at the Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) are more concerned with managerial duties, such as financial management. As discussed later in this chapter, the principals interviewed in this study argued that the in-service courses did not equip them adequately to handle leadership challenges in a changing educational context.

In our view, educating school leaders ought to target teachers both during their teacher education programmes and through in-service courses. This is because teachers are not only central to the learning of the students in their institutions, but also in providing all forms of leadership in such institutions. As we stated in the introduction, in Kenya, the practice has been that leadership and learning are, in a way, considered as separate entities with the former not given much attention during teacher education. In this chapter we argue that due to the somewhat little attention given to the training of school leaders during the teacher education process, there seems to be a missing link in schools where principals do not, in our view, provide leadership for learning. This scenario is illustrated by results from a study on students', teachers' and principals' perceptions of democratic school leadership in secondary schools in Kenya. But, before we delve into the details of the study, we provide brief information on the Kenyan school system.

Governance Structure of Kenyan Education System

The governance structure of education in Kenya changes according to the government in power. For example, from April 2008, two ministries in charge of education have been established; the Ministry of Basic Education which is responsible for primary and secondary school education and the Ministry of Higher Education which deals with tertiary education. Prior to this there was a single Ministry of Education.

In the Ministry of Basic Education, the Minister provides political leadership while the Permanent Secretary is the accounting officer and overall administrative head. The Education Secretary is responsible for all professional matters. Regionally, Provincial Directors of Education, District and Municipal Education Officers are in charge of administration and supervision of education in their respective provinces, districts and municipalities. There is also the National Education Advisory Board, and Provincial and District Advisory Boards, which act as decision-making bodies at their respective levels. Secondary schools are managed by Boards of Governors (BoGs) while primary schools are managed by school committees. Basically, these boards and committees implement policies determined by the central government. Day-to-day administrative functions are carried out by heads of schools. The heads are popularly referred to as headteachers in primary schools, while in secondary schools they are addressed as principals – a term we use in this chapter.

In schools, Principals are the executive officers in charge of various operations within schools including serving as accounting officers, interpreting and implementing policy decisions. They serve as secretaries to the BoG – the managing authority of the institution, responsible for planning, acquisition and maintenance of the physical facilities in the school. They are also expected to promote the welfare of all staff and students within the institution (Republic of Kenya 2002). They are appointed by the TSC mainly based on their experience. The principals work with the help of deputy principals, heads of departments and prefects.

Teacher Education in Kenya

According to the latest Kenya National Policy Framework of Education, Training and Research, the government recognises that teachers are an important entity in the pedagogical process and therefore teacher education requires serious attention. This is because knowledgeable teachers would most likely produce competent students (Republic of Kenya 2004).

Current teacher education programmes take place at universities and Diploma colleges (for secondary school teachers) and Teacher Training Colleges (2-year certificate courses for primary school teachers). The objectives of teacher education programmes are to ensure that the graduates acquire relevant content knowledge, teaching and learning methodology, professionalism, and attitudes which could enable them to diagnose and develop the educational competencies required of the child to interact effectively in the society or to continue to the next level of education (Republic of Kenya 2004).

There is no training for teachers aspiring to be principals apart from optional in-service courses offered by Kenya Educational Staff Institute (KESI) to those already appointed as principals. However, teacher training at all the levels mentioned above includes some courses in educational administration and management.

The Need for Training of School Leaders on Leadership for Learning in Kenya: An Illustration from a Study

As stated earlier, we illustrate the need for a reconceptualisation of the preparation for school leadership in Kenya with findings from a study conducted in Kenya on teachers', students' and school principals' perceptions of democratic school leadership and how these perceptions inform practice in their schools. Democratic school leadership is a recent requirement by the Kenyan Government (Republic of Kenya 2001, 2005), ostensibly, intended to promote learning in schools. In investigating the perceptions, it was also important to find out what the school principals felt about their preparation and development (education) in view of the government's requirements.

Methods

The study was a "compressed time mode" ethnographic case study (Jeffrey and Troman 2004) grounded in commitment to first hand experience and exploration of the school setting on the basis of (though not exclusively by) participant observation (Mason 2002). The data collection was in two phases. Phase 1, which lasted for 3 months, arose out of the need to develop a rationale for selecting two case schools – one where the principal perceived his/her leadership practices as democratic and another where the principal perceived his/her leadership practices as less democratic. In this phase, 12 school principals were interviewed. They were identified using purposive sampling to maintain a balance between the type of school (boarding/day; mixed/girls/boys; national/provincial/district) and the experience of the principals. The 12 school principals interviewed included one in a national school, six in provincial schools and five in district schools. The interviews were audio-recorded and lasted between 45 min to 1 h. This also provided the opportunity to establish a rapport with individual principals whose schools were later used for the case studies.

After the preliminary analysis of the data collected from the 12 school principals, P1 (Case One School) and P10 (Case Two School) were selected for the second phase of the study. P1 was selected because she considered her leadership practices very democratic. P10 was selected because in her perception, democratic leadership was not suitable for her school. She claimed that she found girls very difficult to

deal with and if she applied democratic school leadership then she was bound to fail as a principal. She was the only principal who stated that democratic school leadership was not suitable for her school. Equally, her perception about how to maintain discipline among the girls was in direct contrast to P1 who also headed a girls' school. Whilst P1 argued that the girls were easy to deal with, P10 considered girls difficult to deal with. Because the principals were expected by the government to implement the same policies on democratic school leadership, it was important to establish the factors that brought about the two divergent views. In this chapter, we have mainly used the data collected from the two case schools.

Phase 2 lasted for 3 months. It involved spending 6 weeks in Case One School and another 6 weeks in Case Two School collecting data using interviews with the teachers and principals, focus group discussion with the students, informal conversations with the teachers and students and observations. Case One School was a national boarding girls' school which, during the colonial times, only educated white students. After independence it changed into a "high cost school" charging higher than average school fees and thereby making it "elite". There are only three such girls' schools in the country. At the time of the study, the school had over 70 teachers and about 800 students admitted from every district in Kenya regardless of their economic background. Like all the other national schools in Kenya, it admitted only students who excelled in the primary school examinations – Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE).

Interviews were conducted with eight teachers with a follow-up interview with the Principal. The sample included representation from each of the three management tiers in the school – senior, middle and junior. In the senior management team were the Principal, Deputy Principal, Director of Studies and the Chaplain. The middle-level team included two heads of department/subject teachers. There were three interviewees from ordinary classroom teachers. The interviews with the senior management teachers were conducted in their offices while the rest of the interviews were conducted in a free room normally used for meetings. Each of the interviews lasted between 45 min to 1 h and was audio-recorded with the consent of the teachers. Apart from the interviews, notes were made of informal conversations with the same teachers that took place from time to time in the school during the research period.

The focus group discussions were held with students in Form 2 (15 year olds), 3 (16 year olds), 4 (17 year olds) and the prefects from Forms 2, 3 and 4. The students were identified with the help of the teachers on duty and by asking for student volunteers, three from each class in the same year group. Each of the focus groups discussions had between 12 and 16 students and were conducted after classes (4–5 p.m.). The discussions lasted around 45 min to 1 h and were audio-recorded after getting verbal consent from the students.

Observations focused on specific areas of the schools such as staffrooms, school assemblies and classrooms, as well as isolated functions including church services, games and the school cultural day. They focused on the interactions of teachers within the staffroom, the students' participation in lessons, the operations of the church services – that is, who participated, and how the participants were selected,

how the school cultural day was organised, which students participated and how they were selected. These were meant to provide an insight into the practices in the schools and how they related to the views expressed by the principals, teachers and students on democratic school leadership.

Case Two School was a district girls' boarding school with 272 students and 18 teachers. It is located in a rural area and drew most of its students from the locality. It was started in 2001 and built with the support of the Catholic Church. Interviews were conducted with six teachers with a follow-up interview with the Principal. Unlike in Case One School, where all the teachers were TSC employees, seven teachers in Case Two School were BoG employees. The teachers were divided into senior and junior teachers based on the positions they held in the school. Each category included TSC and BoG employed teachers. In addition to the principal, the senior teachers interviewed were the Deputy Principal, one TSC employed head of department (HoD) and one BoG employed HoD. From the junior teachers were two TSC employed and one BoG employed teachers. The interviews with the Principal and Deputy Principal were conducted in their offices and the rest of the interviews were conducted in the office of the HoD of guidance and counselling. Each of the interviews lasted between 45 min to 1 h and was audio-recorded with the consent of the teachers.

Apart from the interviews, as in Case One School, there were informal conversations that were relevant to the study with teachers on different matters observed in the school, for example, corporal punishment, admission of new students, congestion in the classrooms, and so on.

The focus group discussions were held with students in Forms 3 and 4 and the prefects from the two forms. They were identified with the help of the HoD of guidance and counselling by going with her to the classes and asking for 12–14 students who would volunteer to be included in the discussions. The discussions were conducted after lessons (4–5 p.m.) in the classrooms and lasted between 45 min to 1 h and were audio-recorded after getting verbal consent from students. As in Case One School, observations were confined to specific areas of the school including the staffroom, school assembly, lessons and games.

Thematic analysis was used in categorising the data collected through interviews, focus group discussions, observations and informal conversations. The analysis was done in three stages. The initial step involved "open" coding, which entailed developing categories of information from the data by examining the text (transcripts and field notes) or salient categories of information supported by the text (Creswell 2007). This was done by reading through the data and writing down the categories into which each data section fitted, for example, students' voice, equity and justice and so on. The next stage was "axial" coding which, as Creswell explains, involved interconnecting the categories identified in the open coding and returning to the database to understand the categories that relate to this central phenomenon. In the final stage, "selective" coding, involved building a story that connected the categories and picking out the extracts that best illustrated the themes, identifying complementary and contrasting points of view from the various data sources (students, teachers and principals).

To discuss the findings, drawn from the two case schools each principal was allocated a code, for example, P1 and P10 corresponding with the order in which they were interviewed. The codes helped maintain their anonymity. Similarly, the extracts from the interviews and focus group discussions were coded based on each Case School and the order in which the interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. For example, C1-T1 means Case One interview one and C2-FGD3 is Case Two focus group discussion three.

Findings and Discussion

Training and Development of School Principals

From the findings of the study, the school principals felt that they were not adequately prepared for their roles in schools. This was despite the fact that they had a Bachelor's degree, which is a basic requirement by the TSC for one to be promoted to head a secondary school in Kenya. Whist P10 had attended brief training courses offered by the Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) on school management, P1 had not. The courses are offered for 2 weeks during the school holidays and are voluntary. Both principals had also attended the occasional workshops organised by the Kenya Secondary School Heads Association (KSSHA).

According to the principals, the courses offered by KESI and the KSSHA workshops mostly covered topics on general school management such as changes in the syllabus, financial management and public relations. P10 emphasised that, although the KESI courses were important in helping her come up with solutions to some specific challenges she faced, especially financial management, she felt that the courses were inadequate in equipping her with the skills that she needed to deal with all the issues she faced in school. She suggested that the KESI courses should be offered to teachers before one was appointed a school principal and be expanded to include more topics such as those relating to democratic school leadership as well as how they could apply their management skills to improve learning in their schools. Indeed, P10 commented that principals spent much of their time in schools handling issues related to finances such as fee collection and sorting out procurements so that they were not accused by the education officials of financial mismanagement, which could make them lose their jobs.

The two principals also pointed out that the Bachelor's degree qualifications they got from the university did not prepare them adequately for the expected roles as school principals. For example, P10 stated:

> Having a Bachelor's degree is insufficient for one to be a school principal because we learn to be a teacher but nothing in our training at college prepares one for the current kind of leadership in schools. What we learnt was actually a traditional kind of leadership, things like laissez-faire, but when it comes to actual management of a school, there is nothing that prepares a principal… During the Bachelor's degree programme we simply focused on passing the examinations and the prospects of one becoming a school principal in future is remote and nobody thinks about it at that level (P10).

Thus, even though P10 was in an advanced stage of doing her Masters Degree programme, she still felt that more specialised training was needed that focused on more practical challenges principals faced in schools.

The mechanism of recruiting teachers to become principals is another issue that emerged from the study. As the literature reveals, in many sub-Saharan African countries, the process is unsystematic and not necessarily based on professional criteria (Mulkeen et al. 2005, 2007). Mulkeen et al. point out that the dominant tradition has been to recruit from within the teaching profession, often as a reward for good performance and long years of service. In this study, the principals pointed out that a similar criterion was used to promote them. In our view, therefore, the lack of leadership training for principals could be a challenge to the implementation of democratic school leadership as required by the Kenyan Government as a means of enhancing learning in schools. These findings support Bush's (2008b) argument that the once widely accepted view that teaching qualifications and experience alone provide a sufficient basis for school leaders is gradually being replaced by an understanding that headship is a specialist position that requires a different set of skills from those essential for classroom teachers.

Facilitating Workplace "Learning" for Teachers

Workplace learning theorists have engaged in a number of debates about the nature of learning: whether learning is intentional or unintentional, formal or informal, whether workplace knowledge is tacit or explicit (Pegg 2008). Colley et al. (2002) suggest that formal/informal distinctions are unhelpful as elements of both forms of learning are evident in all settings. Nevertheless, planned and unplanned learning are both considered as contributing to workplace activity (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2004; Wenger 1998). Similarly, as Pegg (2008) argues, improving leadership at all levels of the school creates a deeper pool of potential leaders for the future in terms of both the number and quality of leadership candidates. She adds that the drive to improve the pace and quality of leadership learning in school is intended to overcome these two problems as learning in and through the workplace is perceived as a most effective way of achieving this.

However, Pegg (2007) adds that teachers learning to lead in the workplace encounter a range of alternative ideas through the people that they meet and their experiences both within and outside the workplace. Thus, the workplace learning needed by a teacher to become a school leader is a far more selective activity which, in our view, needs an enabling environment that encourages and fosters this "learning".

In this study, the school principals considered that enabling teachers to perform their duties without hindrance was part of democracy in the school that helped the teachers learn to be leaders. As one principal pointed out, "before the idea of democracy was floated by the government, a teacher would have to keep referring back to the principal, to perform duties allocated to him or her in the school" (P10).

On the basis of these findings, it can be argued that enabling teachers to perform their duties facilitates leadership for learning albeit, practised by school principals in Kenya on a trial and error basis – without adequate training. It would probably work better if this facilitation was done deliberately and in a well planned manner so that it becomes embedded within the schools' structures and policies, as discussed below, rather than being done in an ad hoc manner.

School Structures and Learning

The findings of this study also show that the schools tended to emphasise structures as a way of facilitating school management and learning. For example, in Case One school, the structure included several committees such as the Senior Management committee chaired by the Principal, the Guidance and Counselling committee headed by the Chaplain, the Disciplinary committee headed by the Deputy Principal, the Academic board headed by the Director of Studies and the Games committee headed by the Games teacher. Each academic department held a meeting and nominated a teacher to each of the committees. According to the Principal, the structure facilitated democratic school leadership because it made clear the roles of each teacher or group of teachers in a committee and thus prevented duplication of roles. It also helped students know where their concerns could be addressed.

However, even though the school structure facilitated operations and dialogue among staff in Case One School, the literature shows that some terms such as "senior management" and "middle management" which have been taken from the field of business management, have different connotations when used in schools, as was this the case in this study. Discussing the structural changes in schools in New Zealand, Fitzgerald (2009) explains that one of the more immediate responses to the challenges of self-management was the establishment of structures that were linked directly with roles and which, by inference, emphasized a teacher's position in a hierarchy. She argues that middle leaders were simultaneously responsible for their subject areas, yet the focus on administrative tasks positioned them as part of the school management and organisational hierarchy. In Fitzgerald's view, labelling teachers and teams as "senior management" and "middle level management" has the net effect of privileging the work of some teachers and creates a binary between leader and follower. Thus, there appears to be a focus on the bureaucratic rather than the professional nature of leadership in schools.

The same could be said from this study, as seen in Case One School where some teachers felt that only a "privileged" group of teachers were close to the Principal. One teacher, for example, remarked that the number of times she interacted with the Principal in church was more than she did at work – to emphasise how rarely she interacted with the Principal. In an informal conversation with another teacher, it was claimed that whenever the principal went to the staffroom, she only talked to those she perceived to be close to her.

On the other hand, the senior heads of department and heads of department regularly met the Principal informally either to consult her on specific matters relating to their duties or to have informal talks whenever the Principal had "free" time.

From the observation in Case One School, on a number of occasions during lunch (which was provided free by the school), the senior teachers tended to sit together while the other teachers also sat together. When I inquired from one teacher in an informal conversation why this was so, she mentioned that it could be that each group had issues in common to discuss.

In view of the above discussion, we could argue that opportunities for learning among the teachers in schools were not necessarily enhanced by the leadership, managerial and curriculum structures within the school because, in a way, it favoured those who held positions of authority. This in turn enabled the teachers who felt left out not develop the attitudes necessary for leadership for learning because they felt they were not part of the "inner system". Yet, leadership for learning in such contexts should benefit all teachers within a school.

Leadership and Management

The findings from the interviews with principals also suggested that they viewed their roles more as school managers than leaders. They emphasised the duties they performed in relation to their positions as principals more than the inspirational values, influence and vision development that epitomise leadership (Bush 2003, 2008a). For example, one principal pointed out that: "The principal of today is not the sole decision-maker. She is the coordinator in the new management arrangement…" (P1). While this reflects the changing roles of school principals, it also emphasises the importance that the principals attached to "management" practices rather than leadership. However, we also acknowledge (as discussed earlier) the abstract nature of the term leadership and the thin line between it and management.

The principals also delegated duties to teachers based on the teachers' specific positions of responsibility such as heads of department. During the interviews, the principals either persistently used the concept of "management" or used it interchangeably with that of "leadership". Although we do not focus specifically on the use of the concepts of leadership and management in the schools, the way the school principals viewed their roles was important in the context of the changes that the government required of the principals; that is, to embrace a more democratic school leadership to facilitate learning.

As revealed from the interviews, the principals made it clear that they had no guidelines on how to implement these requirements and, therefore, applied their intuition to initiate the kind of leadership that suited learning in their schools. With lack of adequate training to be school principals, we believe such guidelines would provide them with benchmarks on which to implement the policy. These findings are consistent with arguments by Mulkeen et al. (2007:x) in a World Bank review

on, "retaining secondary school teachers and head teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa", where they point out that:

> Many secondary school administrators are ill-prepared to meet the demands posed by the changing nature of their jobs. Organized and systematic training in educational leadership and effective and transparent management that goes beyond the occasional workshop presently offered in most systems is urgently needed for principals. Principals' critical new roles as instructional leaders within schools, builders of learning communities among teachers, and developers of strong community participation in schools are widely recognized, although few principals have any preparation for this array of new responsibilities.

Mulkeen et al. emphasise that a more systematic approach to the selection and training of principals would lead to a stronger and more democratic school leadership, which in turn, would facilitate learning. We believe the same would apply to the Kenyan situation.

Similarly, in their study of training needs of secondary school principals in Uganda, DeJaeghere et al. (2009) found that school principals were lacking in leadership skills to effectively facilitate all round learning in their schools. They suggested that leadership training is urgently needed for principals and their deputies that address skills such as preparing budgets, managing overall school performance, identifying teachers' training needs, working with community members in fundraising, and working with Ministry of Education officials to make learning more conducive in their schools.

Providing an Enabling Environment for Students to Learn

It can also be argued from this study that the lack of education of school leaders on issues such as leadership for learning could be one of the reasons why the teachers argued that students only required "partial democracy" in the schools:

> We have partial democracy because we still have what I can call undemocratic practices in some cases, like now students are allowed to elect the prefects. But we are supposed to endorse whoever they have elected. We sometimes reject some of the names of the students who are elected and so it is not full democracy (Junior teacher: C1-T2).

The teachers argued that their schools only required "partial democracy" when dealing with students because the students might make some demands that would not conform to the expectations of the school. For example, one teacher claimed that: "the students may demand to wake up at 7 a.m. and not 5 a.m. as is the case now, and that will not give them enough time to prepare for morning studies" (junior teacher: C1-T1). Similar arguments were advanced by P10.

Some students also expressed the view that the leadership practices in schools discriminated against minority groups thus affecting the students' learning. For example, one student commented that:

> I think the issue of ignoring non Christian students should be taken into consideration because I don't get a chance to pray at a suitable place. We are getting a rough time on religious issues. I know as Muslims we can pray anywhere, but in our religion there is that standard of cleanliness and holiness which cannot be found anywhere except at the mosque

because you don't enter with shoes… Right now Muslims don't have a prayer room in the school because there was a fight between two Muslim girls in the prayer room and so the prayer room was closed. But I think it is not fair because there is a day two Christian girls fought in the TV room but the TV room was not closed. We are not even allowed to go for Muslim functions held out of the school compound yet Christian Union members go for their rallies (student: C1-FGD1).

In the observation during the induction programme for the new students, it was noted that the Chaplain paid attention only to Christian services. She was explaining to the new students about the operations of the chapel committee, the values of being God fearing and the value of Jesus in the life of a Christian. She informed the students that all new students were expected to come with a hymn book and a Bible. She also reminded them that Church services, conducted every Sunday at 8.30–10 a.m., were compulsory except for Muslims, but that the Church assembly on Wednesday morning was compulsory for all students regardless of their religious affiliation. As she was explaining all these services, there were about ten students who were Muslims and were wearing veils but she paid no attention to them. There were no provisions for students who were neither Christians nor Muslims in the school.

This suggests that there was need for leadership skills that would facilitate learning without any group of students feeling discriminated against. This borders on social justice which, as literature reveals, is important for learning to take place in schools. For example, Shields and Mohan (2008) argue that it is central to an educator's ability to create learning environments in which all children experience success, in which all children can become curious, inquiring and critically reflective learners. This view is consistent with the approach taken by McKenzie et al. (2008) who contend that educators who focus on social justice must create inclusive and academically challenging classrooms. To create an inclusive classroom learning environment, educators need to distinguish clearly between what is sometimes called students' ability to learn and their opportunity to learn (Shields and Mohan 2008). Similarly, the exclusion of minority voices as demonstrated by the Muslim student in this study could undermine all the good intentions that the school had. As Pryor (2008) argues, the necessity for a free minority voice is a second pedagogical, indeed social/political structure parallel to a larger freedom from inequality. Lack of options for minority voices and the continuation of power of the majority undermine potentially socially just school leadership which in turn could undermine learning.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the education of school leaders in Kenya in relation to the learning needs in Kenyan schools. We have focused on the recognition in current literature that educating school leaders is a necessary endeavour because school leadership skills cannot be left to chance. We have also highlighted the view of

school principals that they lack sufficient training for them to adequately facilitate learning in schools. The in-service courses they attend at KESI are more concerned with managerial duties.

In view of the above, we recommend that there is need for reconceptualisation of school leadership in Kenya that embraces developmental opportunities for school leaders and teachers and focuses on facilitating learning in schools so that school leadership is not viewed as something detached from the learning needs in schools. Some of the preparation for school leadership could be done during the teacher education process in the respective institutions. Further training could target those selected to become principals and there ought to be regular in-service courses after appointment, especially on emerging issues such as democratic school leadership. The in-service courses could be conducted by KESI, which already has the training mandate, through collaboration with the training institutions, the Ministry of Education and the schools. This will help infuse the cultural contexts of the schools, the experience of the serving principals and the government policies and, in turn, make learning a more wholesome experience for both the teachers and the learners.

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Chapter 24
Leadership for Learning in Malaysian Schools

Fatt Hee Tie

Introduction

Society exists in a perpetual state of change. As schools have a responsibility to prepare students for the changing dynamic world, leaders should be competent to ensure that students' progress, achievement and development are monitored closely. The external continuous state of change has a significant implication for schools and their leaders. To face rapid and continual change in society, schools need to restructure, lead, and promote learning outcomes for the new millennium. Deep and meaningful learning enables the future workforce to remain relevant in the complex online network of the outside world. This is similar to the suggestion by Papert (1996) who stressed that learning itself is the only genuinely marketable skill. Stoll et al. (2002) reiterated that learning and learning how to learn are essential future life skills.

Research indicates a strong relationship between school leadership and effective schools (MacBeath and MacDonald 2000). Research showed that school leadership practices have the strongest influence on organisational learning (Leithwood et al. 1998; Argyris and Schon 1978, 1992). Decisions must be made as to how sustainable learning can be further strengthened within as well as outside the school to allow the type of learning needed in a complex world. The quality of leadership of the school exerts a powerful effect on school effectiveness and school improvement (West et al. 2000; Stoll and Fink 1996; Hopkins et al. 1994,). In the United Kingdom, school leadership has been acknowledged as the most important single factor in the raising of school standards and improving school outcomes (DES 1977). School leaders must also be able to focus on the needs and demands of one primary key stakeholder – the students. To survive in the future and continue to

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remain relevant, schools must evolve into creative learning organisations. They have to accommodate to rapid change and allow students to learn how to live in the future (Dalin and Rolff 1995). Leadership for learning is a complicated and complex undertaking given the diverse interpretations and notions of what leadership for learning actually entails.

This chapter discusses leadership for learning from three perspectives. First, it considers the role of school leaders in promoting a learning environment. Next, it examines capacity-building of school leaders in the Malaysian context. Finally, it discusses national development policies and the challenges faced in promoting leadership for learning.

Role of School Leaders in Promoting a Learning Environment

As in other countries, learning remains the primary purpose of all Malaysian schools. Leadership for learning involves leaders making critical decisions as to the real purpose of learning. Unfortunately, in the Malaysian context, there is tremendous emphasis on achieving excellent examination results and the number of 'As' that a student scores. Inevitably, the education system is examination-oriented. Learning is inextricably linked with passing examinations. Students face tremendous pressure during the annual public examinations. Those who do well in the examination receive national publicity in the local media. School principals find themselves immersed in the 'race to the top'. Given an ultimatum to ensure that the school examination results continue to improve every year, principals seek various ways to push up the school's annual examination results. School principals are held accountable and answerable to the ministry if there is a drop in the examination results. On the other hand, school leaders who subscribed to the philosophy and commitment that all students have the capacity to learn and improve face a dilemma as they deal with the issue of whether learning is only for the ultimate purpose of achieving good examination results.

The notion that schools are learning systems and school leaders must prepare students for the future is indeed noble. School leaders owe a professional duty to students to establish and foster a meaningful, relevant, and intellectually challenging environment that focuses on learning as central to the process of schooling. To a certain extent, Malaysian school principals recognise the importance of building and supporting a learning culture in order to fulfil this professional obligation. They have to deal with the issue of whether learning is just another 'add on' feature in the examination-oriented education system.

Effective leadership for learning among Malaysian schools has to consider the issues of how to ensure that the staff, school structures, external links and resources allow students to be transformed into learners that are able to seek, process, and provide information as well as being able to be fully engaged in the learning process. Leadership for learning is vested with the tremendous responsibility of ensuring that effective learning takes place with school leaders committed to helping students

to achieve this objective. In the postmodern era, Middlewood et al. (2005:38) described the degree of commitment expected from leaders as follows:-

> leaders of twenty-first century schools will need to have the will and the expertise to recognise, cultivate and encourage effective learning. For that to happen, they will need to take on and run with the essential truth that the best learning experiences start where the learner is, not where the teacher is – and that point of view challenges much of what has been at the root of educational practice for a long time.

In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education seeks to provide students the best environment that fosters experiential learning. School leaders are encouraged to develop a futuristic, global and strategic overview of the school and be committed to promoting effective student learning as the paradigm shift towards leadership for learning becomes increasingly significant in the country's education policy.

Various researchers have recognised the significant role of the school principal in student learning. Notably, Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1997) acknowledged that 'the head teacher is the steward of learning' whilst Stoll et al. (2003), as cited in Middlewood et al. (2005:39) attempted to postulate that there are seven holistic modes for leaders of learning and leaders must

> …lead by example in encouraging formal and informal questioning of the status quo, providing students and staff with every incentive and opportunity to develop their own learning and challenge others to do the same; stress to everyone involved in the educational debate that nothing should be taken for granted or accepted as fact; give learners in an organisation the confidence and the wherewithal to research and broaden their knowledge base; put research and enquiry at the centre of everything they do.

As a result, school principals are expected to multi-task to foster a more effective learning environment.

Additionally, Leithwood et al. (1998) expressed that leadership for learning needs to be at the heart of an organisation. Leaders who have considerable control over mission, culture, structure, and resources tend to be more successful in establishing a positive learning environment in schools. Faced with increasingly complex and competitive demands from different stakeholders, Middlewood et al. (2005:37) stressed on the need for school leaders to concentrate more on student learning than on the mechanics of teaching and further reiterated that 'schools need to adopt learning-centred leadership if standards are going to continue to rise and create gateways for the widest possible access to lifelong learning'. It is evident that a complex set of internal and external influences act to disrupt the focus on the correct path.

Capacity-Building of School Leaders in Malaysia

In Malaysia, school leaders receive ongoing professional learning at the National Institute of Educational Management (also known as Institute Aminuddin Baki or 'IAB'). Training is focussed only on certain content areas such as finance, student development and human resource management. These training programmes tend to

be competency driven. The institute was set up in March 1979 under the previous name of the Malaysian Education Staff Training Institute. It was established on the recommendations of the Cabinet Committee Review of the Implementation of Educational Policy 1979. As an independent institute, IAB functions as a training institute for the entire Ministry of Education. The strategic goals of IAB consist of:

- To consolidate the training needs analysis in the context of continuous staff development in the educational service;
- To upgrade the planning and implementation of training programmes aimed at developing the competencies of the staff of the Ministry of Education;
- To strengthen the effectiveness of the evaluation programme and training strategies;
- To enhance the consultancy services that relate to educational leadership and management;
- To increase the number of impact studies and research with the purpose of enriching the local corpus of knowledge; and
- To increase the writing and publication of research to develop a collection of best practices.

The two primary objectives of IAB are first, to develop and strengthen the leadership qualities and managerial skills of educational leaders through professional courses and second, to develop the corpus of knowledge in educational leadership and management. To achieve these objectives, IAB has adopted a two stage strategy: first, a medium term branding strategy to reposition the institute as the premier centre for educational leadership and management training and development at an international level; and, second, a long term branding strategy to position the institute as a credentialing authority to award or certify professional trainers in the future (Khair bin Mohamad Yusof 2007). Six strategic thrusts have been identified to meet the objective of making IAB into a premier centre for educational leadership development. These thrusts focused on the enhancement of leadership assessment; high-impact training; organisational development; research and development; knowledge management; networking and collaboration; and a strategic programme on the development of comparative study on educational leadership and management (Khair bin Mohamad Yusof 2007).

In 1998, the IAB introduced the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) programme. This professional programme adopted and adapted the NPQH model from the United Kingdom. Initially, proposals were made for the NPQH diploma to be mandatory in the appointment of new principals in Malaysia. However, the proposal was not implemented due to the entrenched traditional criteria for the promotion of new principals: seniority and job performance. Traditionally, senior school teachers are promoted to become secondary school principals and primary school headmasters based on seniority and job performance. Thus, graduates from the NPQH and even the Masters of Principalship programme at the University of Malaya have to wait for their turn to be promoted.

The NPQH diploma programme was designed based on the following assumptions:

- Quality and systematic training is acknowledged to be vital for school managers (including principals, headmasters, senior assistants) to develop their institutions;

- New school managers must have confidence and competence to ensure that the education system achieves a world class standard;
- School managers must be exposed to the latest knowledge to be able to manage their organisations effectively; and
- That competency to manage in an effective manner is a crucial factor to ensure the success of an educational organisation.

The NPQH programme strives to provide school leaders with the competence and skills that are needed to further strengthen their school and achieve a certain standard of performance. During the training, school leaders are provided with the opportunity to review and update their knowledge on recent education policies concerning education management as well as reflect and improve on their present practices. The NPQH programme allows school leaders to establish a professional network for continuous improvement. The NPQH course consists of two phases: first, lectures at the IAB, and second, a school attachment programme that is carried out in the candidate's former school. The objectives of the NPQH programme are to enable candidates to:

- Realise their own strengths and weaknesses in school management and leadership;
- Demonstrate effective management and leadership skills in school after the programme;
- Conduct research projects according to the requirements stated in the programme;
- Practice characteristics related to the concept of school effectiveness; and
- Identify effective management practices that could be implemented.

In 2009, the NPQH was subsequently changed to the National Professional Qualification for Educational Leadership (NPQEL).

On completion of the NPQEL, some candidates are selected to continue their studies at the Masters level at the University of Malaya for the Masters of Principalship programme. In 1999, the first group of students registered at the University of Malaya for the postgraduate programme at the Principals' Institute. During that time, the institute was established under the auspices of the Faculty of Education. Subsequently, the name of the institute was changed to the Institute of Principalship Studies. In 2011, the institute is now known as the Institute of Educational Leadership. The institute seeks to fulfil the aspiration of the Ministry of Education to provide future school principals with a postgraduate academic qualification aimed at further enhancing their professional knowledge, skills, and competencies in leading and managing schools in a more effective manner. The mission of the institute is to become a centre of educational leadership and management. From inception until August 2009, the institute has produced more than 400 graduates with the Masters in Principalship academic qualification. It serves as an important institution for the professional training and preparation of potential school principals in Malaysia.

Professional learning opportunities for future principals are vital as, according to Leone et al. (2009) the future principal represents a 'bridge of knowledge and encouragement', playing the role of a facilitator for student and adult learning.

In addition, the principal acts as a navigator bringing change to the school. The principal should be competent and act to provide teachers with professional learning opportunities in educational trends and technology, changes in the law, and changes in policy. Principals are expected to be both successful school managers and strong instructional leaders, who are able to find innovative ways to create and sustain learning community cultures in their buildings (Fullan 2001). Further, the action, attitude, behaviour, and communication style of the principal has an impact on the culture and the performance of their schools. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education strives to provide an opportunity for teachers to develop their leadership competencies by providing scholarships for them to pursue the postgraduate programme at the Institute of Educational Leadership in the University of Malaya.

In 2008 IAB introduced the Managing Educational Leadership Talent (MELT) training programme. It focuses on five elements of continuous training and development, namely: growth-oriented training and development; high-impact training and development initiatives; leadership competency assessment; school leadership competency; and, high-impact school leadership (Khair bin Mohamad Yusof 2007).

Generally, leadership in learning in Malaysian schools faces the following challenges: the quality of leadership; the diverse needs of individual learners and teaching staff; the passive involvement of the local community; and a bureaucratic federal ministry. Leaders of learning schools face another challenge – increased complexity in leading and managing schools as a result of the greater accountability and transparency that society now expect from schools.

Conversely, programmes aimed at school improvement in Malaysia have focused less on developing the skills of school leaders to meet the requirements of new learning schools. This limitation concurs with the observation made by Middlewood et al. (2005:35) '…a major irony of the last two decades is that much of the more recent agenda targeted at school improvement has restricted a head's ability to develop the skill set necessary to meet the requirements of new learning schools'.

Most Malaysian principals tend to spend a substantial amount of time on managing rather than leading schools. Burdened with administrative work and numerous meetings at the district, state, and national level, the majority of principals spend relatively little time in classrooms with students and even less time ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. In most cases, the task of curriculum supervision is delegated to senior teachers as principals have little time or opportunity to carry out the task.

It remains a challenge for Malaysian principals to ensure that they engage in their own learning that is real, uncluttered, and closely structured, in order to develop confidence as well as being able to question their assumptions about what works in learning schools (Middlewood et al. 2005). The Ministry of Education has to establish a strategic plan to equip Malaysian school principals with the skill and knowledge to develop systems and structures that are able to identify and respond to the diverse learning needs and demands brought about by today's knowledge-based society. With relevant training, principals should be able to establish learning

schools that focus on individual student learning needs and development. This approach requires school principals, teachers, and the community to collaborate and share the responsibility of leading the learning in school.

The Ministry of Education recognised the urgent need to develop a sense of shared leadership among school principals. Leadership programmes have been implemented to strengthen principals' efforts to establish a climate of continuous formal and informal learning. As the Ministry of Education has acknowledged the fact that principals lead by example, it has encouraged school principals to participate in school-based research. An important initiative that has been adopted is to help school leaders to gradually implement programmes that are aimed at improving schools to enable schools to become learning organisations. Malaysian school principals are given support to adopt new leadership structures and strategies that promote learning at all levels. The selection and awarding of scholarships by the Ministry of Education to allow potential school principals to pursue, on a full-time basis, the NPQEL and the postgraduate Masters programme, represents a good strategy to prepare for the next generation of school leaders. The Ministry hopes that the appointment of the right school leader would in turn educate, lead, and inspire others to engage in learning. This effort is a paradigm shift. School leaders are expected to be a role model for personal lifelong learning while students need to develop independent learning skills to be able to cope with the complexities of the twenty-first century with confidence.

National Economic Development and Student Learning

Malaysia's policy of promoting the ethos and culture of student learning is basically grounded on the mission and vision of its 5-year national development plan that is known as Malaysian Plan. Capacity-building of school leaders, among other functions, strives to ensure student learning at all levels and is primarily driven by economic as well as political forces.

The Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006–2010 seeks to establish an advanced industrialised Malaysian economy through the implementation of the National Economic Development Mission (National Mission). The latter sets out the framework for the national development agenda for the next few years. It outlines the key steps needed to achieve the objectives. The priority areas outlined under the National Mission are:

- To enhance the nation's global competitiveness;
- Improve the quality of human capital development;
- A more equitable distribution of income and wealth; and to
- Improve the quality of life.

The National Mission consists of five major thrusts, the second of which strives to raise the country's capacity for knowledge, creativity and innovation. The government has embarked on a comprehensive improvement of the education system,

focused on the shaping of values to create more well-rounded individuals. Educational policies such as the cluster school policy represent a strategic initiative to realise innovation and change in order to cope with global economic competition. The Ninth Malaysia Plan's biggest challenge is the development of human capital and raising the mental and intellectual capacity of the nation. Three strategies to intensify the development of quality human capital consist of increasing the capacity for and mastery of knowledge; strengthening the nation's capabilities in science, research and development; and nurturing a cultured society with strong moral values.

In addition, the Education Act 1996, and the National Education Development Blueprint 2006–2010 reiterate the importance of student learning. The Education Act 1996 duly recognised the vital role of knowledge as the key determinant of the destiny and survival of the nation. Education in the Malaysian context, as stated in the Education Act 1996, seeks to equip Malaysians with a command of the knowledge, skills, and values that are required in a highly competitive and globalised environment effected by rapid development in science, technology, and information (Tie 2010).

The National Education Policy, based on the National Philosophy of Education, expressed that one of the primary objectives of education is to develop the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, particularly the intellect and the spiritual, emotional and physical domains. Education plays an important role in producing knowledgeable, responsible, and competent individuals who can contribute to the improvement and progress of the family, society, and the nation. The Education Act of 1996 focuses on student learning as the main driver for national progress.

On 18 January 2007, the Ministry of Education introduced the National Education Development Blueprint 2006–2010. One of the major thrusts of the blueprint is the development of human capital with a particular focus on knowledge and skills acquisition as well as the development of students' learning competency. The primary objective of the education policy was to develop and produce students who can think critically and creatively, are able to solve problems and adapt to the changing global environment, based on the belief that everyone has the capacity to learn and improve. The National Education Development Blueprint 2006–2010 identifies the key characteristics of quality human capital that school leaders should focus on. These comprise: the ability to think critically and rationalise action; the ability to compete and be an inventor; respect for others; the ability to apply and enhance knowledge; and the practice of lifelong learning. The nine focus areas for developing human capital are:

- Provide a variety of choice in education for students;
- Enhance ability and transferability of knowledge;
- Enhance students' skills and personality;
- An assessment and evaluation system that is more holistic in nature;
- Strengthening the sports and co-curriculum programme;
- Student discipline;

- Enhancing the leadership of school principals and headmasters and teacher qualities;
- Strengthen the curriculum and promote high order thinking skills; and
- Increase cooperation between the Ministry of Education and related agencies.

The policy instruments that comprise the Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006–2010, the Education Act 1996, and the National Education Development Blueprint 2006–2010 are driven by economic forces and the need for national economic survival in the knowledge economy. These instruments reiterate the importance of learning.

The Ministry of Education in Malaysia attempts to create a student learning culture in school by empowering school principals to transform the learning agenda. School improvement policies such as the cluster school policy, the high performing school policy, and the national key ranking policy, focus on enhancing the quality of students' learning. These policies embrace all stakeholders. It seeks also to provide school principals with greater autonomy in the decision-making process.

As a leader in a learning organisation, principals assume multiple roles and responsibilities. They are stimulators, storytellers, 'copers', and even problem-scavengers (Louis 1994). However, policies to strengthen learning have achieved limited success. The education system continues to remain a heavily centralised and bureaucratised system. It is rare that principals take responsibility to be innovative and creative. Rather, there is a tendency for most of them to depend on directives and instructions from the top. Thus, the directive tone continues to promote a culture that stifles innovation and creativity. Principals have limited opportunities to provide constructive feedback under the top down hierarchical system of policy making. Actual responsibility for policy making in the organisation remains at the federal level. In the multi-cultural Malaysian society, another challenge faced by school leaders is the urgent need to exercise tolerance, patience, and empathy as one has to consider the diverse socio-cultural-religious needs of students and at the same time be able to accommodate as well as develop a learning plan for each individual student (Tie 2010). In addition, the curriculum in the learning school has to relate to what is happening outside the school.

School leaders realise that the world is changing at a rapid pace with needs that are changing amidst an unpredictable future. The issue that arises is whether the traditional school curriculum can stay relevant and be able to produce the future technology-literate citizen. The traditional approach to select and train future school leaders has to be re-examined. It has to consider how future school leaders can contribute towards school improvement and simultaneously strengthen their schools as learning organisations. In the context of leadership for learning, policy makers at the Ministry of Education realise that schools play an important role in promoting learning as a lifelong process and that all individuals have the capacity to learn and improve (Middlewood et al. 2005). The Ministry of Education has attempted to decentralise some aspects of school management and provide school principals greater autonomy in decision-making via the cluster school policy. Nevertheless, school leaders must realise that various stakeholders engaged in the activities of the school will determine the success of the lifelong learning programme.

Principals must be prepared to support student learning by creating conditions for students to refine, practice, reflect and improve their learning over time. Principals must become the promoter and facilitator of a purposeful professional learning community.

Conclusion

This discussion considered recent developments related to leadership for learning. Malaysian school leaders face considerable constraints in leading schools for learning due to the examination-oriented culture. Rote learning and memorisation will continue to remain a common feature in Malaysian schools unless there is a strong commitment to reform the examination-oriented education system.

Although the local district education office, state education department, and federal education ministry may have introduced reforms that value leadership for learning, much more is required to ensure its success. There are some initiatives to further strengthen capacity-building for school leaders. However, many issues have yet to be resolved. These relate to the identification of the actual specific skills expected of school leaders to transform the school learning environment; the identification of supporting factors; the development of leadership capacity; and the sustainability of the change in the long term.

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Chapter 25
Developing School Principals in South Africa

Inbanathan Naicker

Introduction

Globally, there is a concerted effort among countries to ensure that their education systems respond to the needs of their respective societies. Consequently, the expectations for schools and school leaders are changing. An Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2008) study notes that many countries have moved towards decentralisation, making schools more autonomous in their decision making and holding them more accountable for results. These changes have redefined the role of the school principal. In the South African context the job description of the school principal has changed substantially over the years and includes knowledge and skills in areas for which they were not initially trained, such as serving on staff recruitment, selection and promotion committees; school financial management; building networks with other government departments, private sector organisations and non-governmental organisations; and dealing with teacher unions. Given the positive correlation between good leadership and effective schools (Bush 2008), the pressure is now on school principals to ensure that they understand their roles and responsibilities as school leaders and to discharge them in a manner that would enhance the culture of teaching and learning at schools.

Over the last decade in South Africa, much discourse in the field of education has focused on the school principal and the management of schools. This issue has been recognised by the State President of South Africa, Mr J. Zuma who has, on a number of recent occasions, made it clear that while recognising the problems that school principals confront, there will be an increasing focus on the performance of school principals. At a meeting of school principals in the province of KwaZulu-Natal

Zuma, J. (2009). Address by the President of the Republic of South Africa, President Jacob Zuma, on the occasion of the President's national interaction with school principals, Durban, International Convention Centre, 7 August 2009.

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(KZN) in 2009, he stressed that 'school academic performance is highly correlated with the abilities and commitment of the [school] principal' (Zuma 2009). The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs A. Motshekga has also made it clear that in her view 'a school stands or falls on its leadership … school principals are critical to the improvement of our levels of learner performance … they are a key weapon in our arsenal to turn underperforming schools around' (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 3). Additionally, the Education Roadmap of the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) (2008) specifically recommends 'a scaling up of practical management courses for school principals, deputy principals, Heads of Department (HoDs) and school district supervisors (ward managers)'. This, it is recommended, 'will help to achieve strengthened management capacity to ensure working districts and schools' (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 3).

In noting the need for the development of school leaders, this chapter focuses on two initiatives in South Africa aimed at professionally developing school principals in their roles and responsibilities of leading and managing schools. One initiative, the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) is a national initiative of the Department of Education in partnership with higher education institutions and is devolved to the provinces of South Africa. The other, the Principals Management Development Programme (PMDP) is a provincial initiative of the KZN Department of Education in conjunction with the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and private sector organisations namely, Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) and Performance Solutions Africa (PSA). This chapter commences with a background on principalship in South Africa and then provides a brief overview of the training and development of school principals. Accounts of the genesis, aims and roll-out of both the ACE: SL and PMDP are then presented followed by an examination of the content of the programmes and methods and approaches employed in the development of school principals. An evaluation of both the programmes brings this chapter to conclusion.

Principalship in South Africa

The South African *Employment of Educators Act, 76 of 1998* spells out the roles and responsibilities of school principals. In outlining the core duties and responsibilities of the job, this *Act* elucidates the following: the school principal's general and administrative functions, their obligations with regard to the management of human resources, their commitment to teaching, their role in the extra-curricular and co-curricular programme of the school, their interaction with stakeholders and communication responsibilities (Republic of South Africa 1998, PAM Chapter A). Additionally, the South African school principal faces many contextual demands and challenges, including complying with a plethora of ever-changing legislation, regulations and policies; establishing a culture of teaching and learning; improving and maintaining high educational standards; collaborating with parents; dealing with multicultural school populations; managing change and conflict; coping with limited resources; ensuring more accountability to their respective communities; and coping with factors outside schools that may impinge on their jurisdiction (Mestry and Grobler 2004; Steyn 2008). In many

instances these demands and challenges aim to address the effects of apartheid in South Africa. For example, during the days of apartheid many schools in black communities were sites of the struggle against the oppressive apartheid regime, resulting in the erosion of the culture of learning and teaching at these schools. With the advent of democracy, the principals at these schools are tasked with restoring the culture of learning and teaching at these schools.

In keeping with international neo-liberal reforms in education, there has been wide scale devolution of powers to school sites in South Africa. Consequently, the scope of school leadership and management has expanded owing to a shift in responsibilities from local, regional and national bureaucracies to school principals (Bush 2008). Further, owing to devolution, there is increasing demands from local communities to have a greater say in the operation of schools. The creation of governance structures such as School Governing Bodies (SGBs) means that the principal can no longer be 'lord' of an educational fiefdom. Instead, a democratic coalition of interest groups are now responsible for governing schools (Holt and Murphy 1993; Mestry and Grobler 2007). This thus leads to increasing complexities in terms of the role of the school principal.

Given such demands on the school principal, Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007) conclude that the task of the school principal has changed irrevocably and contends that attention should be given to the process of how school principals are trained or prepared for the task of principalship. Bush (2008), in support of Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007), notes the additional responsibilities imposed on school principals and calls for them to receive effective preparation for their demanding and complex roles.

Internationally, in many first world countries, strict qualification requirements apply to the post of school principalship. Duncan Hindle, a former Director General in the Department of Education in South Africa, notes that a qualification in school leadership and management is a prerequisite for the job of school principal in many countries (Business Report 2007). For example, in the United States of America (USA) more than 90% of the states require that a prospective school principal complete a state-approved preparation programme that leads to a certificate as a school leader (Roberts 2009). In England, the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is mandatory for those candidates applying for their first principalship at schools (National College n.d.; Olsen 2007).

Despite strict certification and training requirements in many first world countries for school principals, there are still a large number of countries where the only requirement for becoming a principal is a teaching qualification and teaching experience. The OECD (2008) study observes that teaching alone does not guarantee that individuals have the knowledge and skills to run effective schools. This view is supported by Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007) who asserts that teaching excellence is not necessarily a valid indicator of the management and leadership task of a school principal. In South Africa the qualification requirements for school principalship is extremely low. The minimum educational qualification for school principalship is a 3-year post matriculation qualification inclusive of a professional teaching qualification (KZN Department of Education 2008). A notable omission in terms of educational qualifications is the prerequisite that candidates possess a

school leadership and management qualification. Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007, citing Van der Westuizen 1988) make the point that successful completion of an education management course should be a recommendation for appointment to the position of school principal. In terms of experience, all a candidate requires is a minimum of 7 years experience in education (KZN Department of Education 2008). There is no 'unpacking' of what experience in education entails. Consequently, a classroom-based educator who has never occupied a formal leadership and management position at a school is eligible to apply for the post of school principal and be appointed to such a post. Given such minimal requirements to be appointed to the post of school principal in South Africa, Mathibe (2007) asserts that this places school administration, management, leadership and governance in the hands of 'technically' unqualified personnel.

Training and Development of School Principals in South Africa

Over the past three to four decades, the academic and professional training of school principals has appeared on education agendas of most countries and has been a central point for discussion and action. From a brief overview of the discussion, Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007) report that the following matters were deemed important: training, certification, subject content, selection, and the relationship between the academic and practical aspects of training. Notwithstanding international foregrounding of the professional training for school principals, and the calls locally for the professionalisation of the post of school principal (see Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren 2007), in South Africa 'the wheels turned very slowly'.

Since the watershed year of 1994 in the socio-political landscape of South Africa, when a democratic regime replaced the autocratic apartheid government, education leadership and management began to be recognised as being of special importance in the democratic transformation of education in South Africa. According to Berkhout, Heystek and Mncube (2010), the Ministerial Task Team on Education Management Development (see Department of Education 1996) supported the idea that education management development is the key to transformation in education. Stemming from this, she observes that several national initiatives for education management development followed but with little transformational success.

The Genesis, Aims and Roll-Out of the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE:SL)

The need for a national standard for school principals was articulated by the Directorate for Education Management and Governance Development when they affirmed that the competency of school principals in the country is a national

imperative and the demand for professional school managers is growing. They identified a major challenge in the education system as that of finding visionary and competent leaders and managers with appropriate professional education leadership and management competencies (Department of Education 2008). Given this challenge, the idea was mooted by the Directorate for Education Management and Governance Development for a qualification that would develop school leaders and managers. Further, under the Cabinet Lekgotla (a consultative forum comprising cabinet members, top government officials, provincial premiers and government advisors) Capacity Assessment Tasks (CAT) process, pressure was brought to bear on the Department of Education to 'make it mandatory for every principal to undergo specialist training and to design an intensive experiential training programme for principals' towards the overall goal of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of principals and professionalising the service' (Department of Education 2008, p. 2). Consequently, a national consultative process was convened by the national Minister of Education which included representatives from the university sector. This consultative process sowed the seeds for the development of a national programme (qualification) in school leadership called the ACE: SL. According to Berkhout et al. (2010), this programme would become a prerequisite for all school principals. Duncan Hindle, a then-Director General in the Department of Education, proclaimed that this qualification will eventually become a compulsory requirement for all current and would-be school principals in South Africa (Business Report 2007). The vision of the programme reflects the high expectations that the Department of Education held:

> The programme seeks to provide structured learning opportunities that promote quality education in South African schools through the development of a corps of education leaders who apply critical understanding, values, knowledge and skills to school leadership and management within the vision of democratic transformation (SAIDE 2007, p. 9).

This programme was the first of its kind in South Africa and it was expected to be different from other ACE programmes in terms of learning principles, assessment approach and nature and orientation (Berkhout et al. 2010). In terms of the aims of the ACE: SL, the programme is intended to: provide leadership and management skills to enable schools to provide learners with quality education; provide professional leadership and management of the curriculum and therefore ensure that schools provide quality teaching, learning and resources for improved standards of achievement for all learners; strengthen the professional role of the school principal; develop school principals who are able to critically engage and be self-reflective practitioners; and enable school principals to manage their schools as learning organisations and instil values supporting transformation in the South African context (SAIDE 2007).

The ACE: SL is a 2-year part-time qualification offered by accredited Higher Education Institutions. The first field testing phase was carried out in May–June 2007 involving a cohort of 536 principals accessing the programme at five accredited Higher Education Institutions. These principals completed the qualification in June 2009. The second field testing phase commenced in January 2008 with a second

cohort of principals who completed the programme in December 2009. A report of the KZN Provincial Operational Team (POT) indicates that the field testing phase that was undertaken from 2007 to 2009 was successful in that they were able to engage a total of 1,667 school principals and aspiring school principals from all nine provinces in South Africa involving an equitable gender mix and range of school types (Department of Basic Education 2009). From 2010 and beyond, the Department of Education has given its blessing to a full roll-out of the programme throughout the country (Department of Education 2008). The vision of the Department of Education is to get 8,000 school principals and deputy principals through the ACE: SL programme at 16 higher education institutions over the next 5 years (Govender 2010).

The Genesis, Aims and Roll-Out of the Principals Management Development Programme (PMDP)

Against the background of the poor performance of schools in some districts in the province of KZN, a private sector organisation, PSA entered into discussions with senior political figures in KZN and officials of the KZN Department of Education as well as with potential funding organisations in 2008. The intention was to look at developing a management skills programme which would rapidly up-skill existing school principals to be able to manage their institutions more effectively and thereby enable these schools to produce better results (KZN Department of Education 2010). A draft programme was developed and private sector funding was sought to cover the costs of developing the programme and funding students on the programme. Funding was obtained from the J&J Development Projects Trust and later the DBSA who agreed to fund a pilot programme with supportive funding from the KZN Department of Education (KZN Department of Education 2010).

There was extensive consultation with regard to the programme. All stakeholders in KZN, including all educators' unions, were consulted. Having been endorsed by all concerned, the piloting phase of PMDP was launched in the second half of 2009. The duration of the programme was 6 months with certification and quality assurance of the programme being the responsibility of the UKZN. The principals of 50 schools, which covered 3 Districts and 6 Wards in KZN participated in the pilot programme. In addition to the school principals, the Ward Managers who oversee the Wards in which the school principals were selected were also required to be part of the programme. The pilot programme was successfully completed in December 2009 where 95% of the students met with success and were certificated by UKZN. Given this successful output the programme was rolled-out to cover a larger number of districts and wards from 2010 and beyond. The vision of the KZN Department of Education is to put 1,710 principals in the province through the PMDP programme over the next 3 years (KZN Department of Education 2010).

Content of the Programmes

Bolam (1999, cited in Bush 2008) asserts that one of the modes for leadership development is knowledge for understanding. Each of the programmes specifies the 'knowledge for understanding' as the content to be covered. In terms of the ACE:SL, the content is packaged into modules categorised as fundamentals, core and electives (see Table 25.1).

Table 25.1   Modules in the ACE:SL

Component	Module
Fundamental	Effective language skills in school leadership and management
	Basic computer literacy for school management
Core	Understanding school leadership and management in the South African context
	Managing teaching and learning
	Lead and manage people
	Manage organisational systems, physical and financial resources
	Manage policy, planning, school development and governance
	Develop a portfolio to demonstrate school leadership and management competence
Elective	Lead and manage subject areas/learning areas/phase
	Mentor school managers and manage mentoring programme in schools
	Conduct outcomes-based assessment
	Moderate assessment

Adapted from SAIDE (2007)

The programme is offered on a part-time basis and spans 2 years. A study carried out by Mncube et al. (2010) reveals that the content of the ACE: SL is congruent to the learning needs of school principals. In this study, principals on the ACE: SL identified managing teaching and learning as well as setting a clear vision for the school as important areas in which they need development.

The content of the PMDP, owing to the fact that it is taught only in 6 months, is packaged into six compulsory study units. The study units are as follows:

• Direction and Planning
• School Governance
• Curriculum Management
• Resource Acquisition and Management
• Financial Management
• People Management

Borrowing from an analysis of school leadership programmes in different countries by Bush (2008) and Bush and Jackson (2002), both the programmes appear to show some similarity in terms of content to international leadership and management

development programmes. Bush (2008) identifies the following five common elements which appeared in the programmes of more than half of the nine countries he surveyed:

- Instructional leadership or learning and teaching
- Human resource management
- Financial management
- Law (includes policy)
- Administration (in some countries the term management is used)

An analysis of modules of the ACE: SL against these five content areas shows that all five are covered by the ACE:SL programme. In terms of the PMDP programme, four of the five content areas are covered by the PMDP study units.

Bush and Glover (2003, cited in Bush and Glover 2004) declare that preparation programmes for school leaders should include elements of both leadership and management. An analysis of the content areas of both programmes shows that the ACE: SL covers elements of both leadership and management whereas the PMDP has a strong bias towards management. The designers of the PMDP acknowledge that their focus in the programme is on management rather than leadership owing to the need for 'getting the basics in place [as being] regarded as more important' for schools (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 6).

Methods and Approaches to Development

Four common methods and approaches to learning underpin the two programmes viz. role-embedded learning, mentoring and coaching, portfolios and the establishment of leadership practice communities (LPC's).

Role-Embedded Learning

Gray and Bishop (2009) and Fullan (2009) identify role-embedded learning as one of the key contributors to successful leadership learning. They assert that high-quality learning coupled with on the job application of knowledge and practices enhance leadership learning. They add that the experience will enable leaders to translate theory into everyday practice by experiencing the actual responsibilities of a school leader. Olsen (2007), in supporting role-embedded learning, asserts that it helps when school principals have much of their training grounded in the realities they are actually going to face. Both, the ACE: SL and the PMDP, combine knowledge accessed during contact sessions with on the job applications of such knowledge. For example, at the contact sessions in the module on Managing Teaching and Learning, knowledge on drawing up teaching time-tables that are compliant with the curriculum model in use is transmitted to principals. When they get back to their schools they are expected to put this knowledge into practice by drawing up teaching time-tables relevant to their school contexts.

Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring has become increasingly important as a mode of leadership and management development in many countries. It is viewed as being highly successful in promoting the development of practising and aspiring leaders (Bush and Glover 2004). Mentoring features prominently in the ACE: SL. In the ACE: SL the principals are assigned a mentor at the commencement of the programme. They work with the mentor over the 2-year period. The mentor visits school principals at their schools to provide support and to act as a 'sounding board' for the school principals. A study conducted by Berkhout et al. (2010), points out that while the recruitment of mentors with education leadership and management mindsets proved problematic in some provinces, in others they were fortunate to attract several retired school principals with good reputations who were prepared to serve as mentors.

While the ACE: SL draws mainly on mentoring, the emphasis in the PMDP is on coaching. Coaching, according to Bassett (2001, cited in Bush and Glover 2004) differs from mentoring in that it emphasises the skills development dimension. After attending contact sessions which are held once every 3–4 weeks in the PMDP to engage with the content of the study units, coaches go out to each school to support principals in attaining the outputs for the study unit they have completed during the contact sessions. The PMDP comprises a total of 24 applied outputs and the coaches are required to coach principals through all 24 outputs. According to principals who were on the programme, coaching 'was the defining feature of the programme' and was of 'most value' (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 6).

Portfolios

Portfolios are increasingly being used as a tool in leadership development. Wade and Yarbrough (1996) view portfolios as the collection, selection and organisation of work over time that shows evidence of self-reflection and learning on the part of the author. Both, the ACE: SL and the PMDP, make use of portfolios in enhancing leadership and management development. In the ACE: SL, a core module (see Table 25.1) is dedicated to the compilation of a reflective portfolio. The module requires school principals to compile, over a 2-year period, a reflective portfolio with evidence of competence in school leadership and management (SAIDE 2007). The school principals are required to record all evidence related to the four core modules in the qualification, namely:

- Leading and managing people
- Managing organisational systems and physical and financial resources
- Managing policy, planning, school development and governance
- Managing teaching and learning (SAIDE 2007)

School principals are to include all the evidence produced during the four core modules of the programme which comprises completed assignments, written tests,

work-based projects, etc. The portfolio is also to include relevant evidence school principals have produced during the execution of their regular school leadership/management functions either before or during the programme which are related directly to the outcomes of the four core modules. In addition, the school principals are to include reflective commentaries and a personal and organisational development plan (SAIDE 2007).

In terms of the PMDP, school principals have to work with their school management team (SMT) in developing the portfolio. Each school principal on the programme has to develop a portfolio of the 24 applied outputs which are related to the 6 study units (KZN Department of Education 2010). An example of an applied output is to *draw up a school assessment policy*. School principals, after having discussion on this in their contact session in the study unit Curriculum Management would then work with their SMT in developing a school assessment policy. A coach would guide the school principal through the process and once successfully completed, the coach would sign off this task which the school principal could then enclose in his/her portfolio.

Leadership Practice Communities (LPCs)

The ACE: SL and PMDP are so arranged that they bring together school principals in an educational district. This creates a LPC. LPC's, according to Helsing and Lemons (2008) are teams of school leaders that regularly work together with the purpose of supporting each other in order to improve teaching and learning within all schools. During contact sessions in both programmes, school principals meet under the guidance of a tutor. During these sessions school principals have the opportunity to share their experiences in implementing what they have learned. When they are away from their learning centres they could communicate with colleagues from their learning centres in order to 'bounce ideas off them' with regard to leadership and management issues. This thus creates a form of peer support and network. Mathibe (2007) notes that these networks provide a supportive professional community beyond the school buildings.

Evaluation of the Programmes

The comments of the school principals whilst on the programme were very positive. Mncube et al. (2010, p. 133) report from their study that the majority of school principals on the programme were very optimistic that the ACE: SL will equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to lead and manage effective schools. A principal remarked:

> This ACE programme will be able to equip me with the knowledge of management and leadership… it will equip me with those tools to guide and to take the school to higher levels.

An internal assessment of the ACE: SL conducted by the School Management and Governance Directorate of the Department of Basic Education shows that the ACE: SL is meeting its aims. School principals on the programme reported that since undergoing the ACE: SL they are able to provide better professional leadership and management of their schools (Department of Basic Education 2009, p. 3). Further, a key finding of the internal assessment was the positive impact that the programme has on the participants' curriculum delivery at their school. Some of the other comments of school principals on the programme were:

> There is now a deep realisation that the core business of a school is teaching and learning.
>   School-based in-service training of staff has improved. (Department of Basic Education 2009, p. 5)

An assessment of the PMDP programme reveals that it holds much promise for the development of school principals. Of the first cohort that went through this programme in 2009, 95% were successful in meeting all the outputs of the programme. A quantitative analysis was done of the secondary school principals on the programme and their schools' National Senior Certificate pass rate. The schools of the principals who were on the programme achieved an average improvement in their National Senior Certificate Results of 12.3% (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 11). While the KZN Department of Education ascribes this improvement to the school principal's participation in the programme, the question arises whether the training of school principals can have such a large impact on learner outcomes over such a short period of time.

The qualitative assessments from the officials from the KZN Department of Education about the programme are also very encouraging. A comment from one of the Deputy Chief Education Specialists was:

> I was very impressed with the manner in which the course was facilitated as well as the course content. It was very practical and hands-on.

A comment from one of the Ward Managers reflects how the programme has enhanced curriculum management at schools:

> The school management in the participating schools has changed for the better. The important one for me is the Curriculum Management: firstly the principals were not confident about the role of the HOD's and therefore did not use them fruitfully to drive Curriculum Management, secondly now I see them getting the HODs involved, discussing the roles and responsibilities according to the PAM document (distributed at the workshop), which is great.

The comments from staff members (both classroom-based educators and school management team members) whose school principals participated in the programme reflect the success of the programme on school leadership and management. The comments of two Heads of Department were:

> We are now getting much more support and attention and we are more involved in the planning of the school. The principal also depicts a more professional and balanced manner in which he conducts himself.

> We have started talking collectively about planning, lesson plans, learning programmes …
> We now have a slot to say something at SMT meetings, so it is no longer just the principal's
> meeting.

Comments of two educators were:

> Our teamwork in the school has grown much stronger.
>
> I feel far more involved in the running of the school. The principal never used to tell us
> anything, but now he is involving us and giving us information. We now have discussions
> whereas before we were just given an instruction. We are following a much stricter routine
> in terms of recording attendance. We now do this twice a day at set times.
>
> (KZN Department of Education 2010, pp. 15–18)

Conclusion

In South Africa there is a dire need to improve the outputs of schools. One sure way of accomplishing this is to improve school leadership and management. The ACE: SL and the PMDP go a long way to addressing this. However, when one looks at the number of school principals and aspiring leaders that need development, both the programmes fall far short of addressing this. For the outputs of the entire system to improve, the leadership and management capacity of all in the school system (ward managers, SMTs, teachers) need to be developed. Therefore, access to programmes such as the ACE: SL and the PMDP need to be broadened so as to accommodate far more school principals and aspiring leaders than is envisioned by the Department of Education.

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Chapter 26
Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Zimbabwe

Chrispen Chiome

Introduction

Every successful team has a good leader. The leader must move with the times. Learning institutions must be sufficiently well positioned so that they are responsive to changes in the global village such as accountability, quality concerns, student outcomes, the mushrooming of the knowledge economy, public demands for more effective schools and value for money concerns. This chapter shares the experience on the ways of building capacity in school leaders in Zimbabwe. It is an in-depth content analysis of four in-service programmes based on empirical data collected from the schools, the graduates and the teachers. It is a guide for school leaders, policy makers and educational managers. It recognizes the close link between the quality of school leadership and school performance and that the quality of leadership in any establishment is key to providing excellent learning (HMIE 2007b). At a time when expectations of schools are skyrocketing, school leaders must play an increasingly important role in helping to transform schools and student performance. This chapter provides some lessons about developing school heads who can carry out the complex work of overhauling school culture, organization, curriculum and instruction to ensure that schools achieve the goals of teaching and learning. In this context, the chapter looks at the historical context of the Zimbabwe education system, examines commissions of enquiry into education and training, with particular emphasis on those that focus on training school heads, and then explores the major programmes of school leadership training in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Open University's educational management programme, the Africa University programme, the Better Schools Programme and the School Heads for Africa Programme. The lessons learned and the challenges encountered in training school leaders for learning will be discussed.

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The Zimbabwe Education System

About Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a landlocked Southern African country with a population of about 13 million people. It is a member of international organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union (AU) and The United Nations (UN). It is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. In this context, the Zimbabwe Government recognizes education as a basic human right that is vital for personal and societal development, in general, and for achieving the education for all targets and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in particular. One of the key educational policy objectives of Zimbabwe is to provide basic education to all children regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, politics, gender, nationality, social background or religion.

Historical Background of the Zimbabwe Education System

The education system in Zimbabwe prior to independence in 1980, was riddled with institutionalized problems (Gatawa 1998). The system was racially divided into two systems. One sub-system catered for Whites, Asians and Coloureds while the other catered for the African majority. The two subsystems were given different resources. The Whites, Asians and Coloureds system received the most resources while the African system was the least resourced. A racially segregated education system was officially created by the 1899 Education Ordinances (Zvobgo 1986) and sustained in various forms over the years up to independence in 1980. European education (for Whites, Asians and Coloureds) was compulsory for all children of school age, the best teachers, enjoyed a small teacher pupil ratio, had the latest teaching-learning gadgets, tuition was free, and received liberal financial support from the state and had a curriculum designed to produce leadership for industry and government (Gatawa 1998). The African education was the exact opposite of this. Access was highly restrictive, government support sparing and there were shortages of teaching and learning materials. The curriculum was tailored to produce semi-skilled workers to service industry and government. The government emphasis was on the development of the White, Asian and Coloureds education while African education was left in the hands of the missionaries who bore the greater responsibility for African Education throughout the colonial era.

In the then Rhodesia (Zimbabwe's name before independence), no government participation in education was forthcoming until the late 1940s (Zvobgo 1986). The only notable assistance to missionaries was after 1903 when mission schools were given grants in aid to help them expand their missionary work. However, the facility was only accessed by those mission schools which had agreed to follow stringent

policy guidelines laid down by the government of the day. One policy guideline was that a school devotes half of its daily working hours to non-academic (manual) work. The policy initiative ensured that African education developed along different lines from that of the European education. This is one reason why the emphasis was on manual rather than academic education.

The highly segregated education system that was in place from 1890 to 1980 negatively affected the Tribal Trust Lands, where the majority of blacks lived. These remote areas were separated by wide expanses of educationally neglected areas and only a few children managed to pass through the artificially imposed bottlenecks. There was a critical shortage of trained teachers for all levels of the education system. The biggest problem though was that there was no deliberate policy to train head teachers for school leadership. School heads were left on their own to learn the tricks of the trade through trial and error, and their hands were tied to the back. Heads of schools are still a professional group that is largely overlooked by various education reform movements worldwide, yet evidence suggests that, second only to the influence of classroom instruction, school leadership strongly affects student learning (Davies et al. 2005).

The Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET) (1999) noted that important recommendations of the Report of the Southern Rhodesia Education Commission (1962) and The Committee of Inquiry into African Primary Education (1974) had not seen the light of the day. There were competing budgetary requirements that got into the way of their implementation and sustainability, to the extent that the recommendations were neglected, yet they might have ushered in a new era in the training of heads of schools. What authorities at that time failed to understand is that research has established that heads of schools exercise a measurable, though indirect, effect on school effectiveness and student achievement (DES 2007). School leadership appears particularly to impact the quality of teaching in schools. School leaders can provide focus and direction to curriculum and teaching and manage the school efficiently to support student learning. School heads also evaluate teachers and make decisions about their class allocation and classroom assignments. When classroom instruction is weak in underperforming schools, or when large numbers of teachers are teaching out-of-field in these schools, significant responsibility rests with the head of the institution (DES 2007). Implementation of these reports could have resulted in the production of productive heads of schools but in this case they remained in a sink and swim scenario as they continued to fumble in the darkness through their hit and miss experiments in schools.

Education Reforms at Independence in 1980

During the first decade of independence, the Zimbabwe government concentrated on increasing access to education. This period saw a rapid expansion of the education system. Enrolments rose in leaps and bounds (Zvobgo 1986). For instance, as noted in the Education Secretary Report cited in CIET (1999), in 1979 there were

2,401 primary schools enrolling 81,958 pupils learning in segregated schools, but ten years later primary schools had increased to 4,504, enrolling in excess of 2,274,178 pupils. At secondary school level, there were 177 schools in 1979 with a student population of 66,215; 10 years later the secondary schools had increased to 1,502 with an enrolment of 695,882 students.

The new policies resulted in phenomenal expansion of educational provision and access. This expansion put pressure on human, financial and infrastructure resources as well as teaching and learning resources. This expansion of educational provision was a remarkable achievement, but had adverse effects on quality of education. The growth outstripped capacity to provide quality education resources. To make matters worse, the numbers of applicants for school head positions have been declining and there has been a high turnover among incumbent heads due to the economic meltdown and an unfriendly political environment (UNICEF 2009). There was also concern about the quality of leadership and the question of whether the structures and cultures within which school heads worked, and through which they are trained, were adequate. Moreover, the loss of experience, expertise, knowledge, and wisdom had the potential to impact adversely on school quality and student learning (HMIE 2007a; DES 2007; Connolly and James 2006). The government responded by appointing a commission of enquiry into education and training.

The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET 1999)

The Zimbabwe government put in place a commission of enquiry into education and training. The terms of reference among others required the commission to:

> Advise on system-wide capacity building or enhancement and measures for capacity retention. (CIET 1999: 80)

In the study, the commission found that heads of schools did not rise to the demands of their roles and were in the danger of being overtaken by global events. The commission recommended that the Ministry of Education should invest more resources in training heads of schools and education officers. They noted that capacity building for professional personnel, such as heads of schools, is a prerequisite for a quality education and confirming Grubb and Flesser's (2006) argument that the job of a school head is too big for one person. Against this background, the major challenge facing the Zimbabwean education system was to develop visionary leaders with the appropriate skills, competencies, professional education and attitudes that will drive the education system into the future; leadership that lasts (Hill 2006). The Ministry of Education was given the mandate of responding comprehensively and constructively to this demand. There was a need to put into place measures that could be adopted even within tight financial limits in order to raise the quality of education. This opened the door for the various school leadership training programmes that will be discussed in the following sections.

Educating School Leaders in Zimbabwe

Four programmes will be looked at as strategies for educating school leaders. These are the Zimbabwe Open University's Educational Management Programme, the Africa University's Public Sector Management Programme, the Comsec Training and Support Programme for School Heads in Africa and the Better Schools Programme Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwe Open University's Educational Management Programme

The Zimbabwe Open University is an open and distance teaching university. It offers degree and diploma programmes through distance learning methods. In 1993, it embarked on a school leadership preparation Bachelor of Education programme that was intensely focused on instructional improvement and offered a hands-on approach that closely integrated internships and coaching with academic coursework. The programme was premised on the thinking that: 'Research has shown that school improvement efforts simply won't succeed without effective leadership' (Wallace Foundation 2007). The programme targeted school heads and senior teachers who enrolled in a systematic programme of study that ended with an award of a university degree in educational leadership, planning and policy. The mode of delivery was distance education. Initially the programme targeted educational leaders in Zimbabwe but later opened its doors to candidates who were excellent teachers with strong leadership potential. The tutors in the programme were chosen on the basis of their knowledge and experience of school leadership. The programme provided the candidates with mentoring by highly esteemed and experienced school heads, education officers and lecturers.

The 24-module programme contains, among other subjects, Educational Leadership, Organizational Development (OD), Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness, Managing Change and Innovation in Education, Curriculum leadership and Supervision of Educational Personnel. There is field-based learning guided by school leadership practitioners. It involves initial socialization, role clarification and technical expertise. The aim is to develop attitudes, skills, knowledge and professional behaviours associated with school leadership success (DES 2007).

Reports from schools, heads and teachers indicate that graduates of this programme play a vital role in setting the direction for successful schools. They point out that the programme has successfully influenced heads' beliefs and behaviours in ways that have improved student learning and it has helped to develop strong, skilled and committed school leaders. More schools have indicated that they became vibrant learning communities under the direction of ZOU graduates. However, a range of critics, including graduates themselves, have raised concerns on the delivery mode, the resources used, the high turnover of lecturers and a

curriculum that is disconnected from the real-world complexities of leading a school. Despite these shortcomings, this programme has since expanded into southern African countries such as Namibia and Botswana. In 2009 it was also made available online at: http://www.zou.ac.zw/zouonline.

The Africa University's Public Sector Management Programme

Africa University (AU) is a church run institution that is housed in Zimbabwe but admits students from all over Africa. In 2008, Africa University, in response to the lack of capacity in African institutions, launched the Public Sector Management Training Programme (PSMTP). Fifty-six graduates of the first and second cohorts of the Master's programme were from Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe (PSMTP 2008). The initiative was specifically aimed at enhancing the understanding which public sector leaders have of the critical role they play in promoting and implementing policies across Africa. The initiative highlights the necessity of having leaders committed to leading the work of internationalizing the curriculum and preparing African students to be citizens of the global community. The overall aim is to provide a continental learning platform from which heads of schools, departments and ministry officials can draw to support subsequent quality reviews in education institutions. The changing political, social and economic environment in Africa underscores the need for countries to have an efficient public sector (PSMTP 2008). The school is one of the key institutions responsible for the formulation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) and is set to benefit from this initiative funded by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF).

Notable courses that directly benefited schools are Governance and Leadership, Strategic Planning and Management, ICT, Performance Management, Ethics and Professionalism. Building capacity in public institutions is of critical importance to the building of social capital. Using the PSMTP initiative to enhance the capacity of head teachers in Zimbabwe consolidates a rich and vibrant learning environment that acknowledges Zimbabwe's vast multicultural diversity. This is nothing less than a strategic imperative for the educational, economic and social improvement of all citizens. Heads of schools and other educational administrators who benefited from the programme agreed that the programme impacted strongly on curriculum, assessment and adaptation to local concerns, despite the fact that its influence is diluted because the programme is open to all African countries.

Some of the challenges include availability of competent facilitators, and being sensitive to the varied needs of individual countries that provide students. The programme is still based on a managerially focused curriculum and a traditional academic model of organization. It confers a master's degree which is not a measure of school leadership competency but a measure of academic competency. This programme focused more on the public service in Africa and had no close ties to

schools or districts, yet School and community connections are crucial in developing more sustainable leadership and contextualized curricula (Hargreaves and Fink 2006). Despite this, graduates have provided evidence of their capacity for leading school improvement and advancing student achievement. Although this university provides exemplary head teacher training, many more do not. Yet, in Zimbabwe there are few, if any, alternatives to college- and university-based school head preparation programmes. However, the social policy and political landscape has changed completely and head teacher training in universities needs to move with the times otherwise it may be in the danger of failing to address current, pertinent issues.

The Comsec Training and Support Programme for School Heads in Africa

At the World Conference on Education for All in Thailand in 1990, education ministries, international agencies and NGOs agreed on action plans to improve the capacity and performance of schools in order to provide every child with the highest quality of education possible, within the context of shrinking resources and increasing demands on the personnel responsible for its delivery. In October 1990, the Commonwealth Ministers of Education and the Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC) decided to collaborate and share information on ways to improve the quality of education. Initial efforts targeted head teachers as it was felt that the head carried prime responsibility for creating an effective educational environment (Hill 2006). Many head teachers in Africa, for reasons largely beyond their control, did not have the necessary skills and training to lead schools into the future. Many were appointed without adequate preparation and worked without effective professional support.

The Comsec Training and Support programme for School Heads in Africa was born out of these concerns and Zimbabwe launched its own chapter in 1993. The country witnessed the launch of the Head Teacher Training and Support Programme (HTSP) with the contention that institutional excellence can be studied, applied, refined and hopefully impact on teachers and pupils. It was assumed that the school is as good as its head and if the head undertakes relevant development activity, then the benefits will trickle down to the levels below.

Notable achievements in this effort included programme materials, which were printed and distributed throughout the country. There was also a nationwide network of school clusters offering heads peer support and enabled them to study through distance education what was previously a 'face-to-face' delivery.

As a follow up to the Comsec Training and Support programme for School Heads in Africa, the Commonwealth Secretariat was instrumental in bringing key stakeholders together to create what has come to be known as the Development of African Education (DAE) Teacher Management and Support Programme (TMS), not only in Zimbabwe but also in other African countries. This led to the establishment of a Country Working Group (CWG) in each country. The main function of

the CWG was to develop a Country Action Plan Programme (CAPP) to address priority issues identified in each country. In Zimbabwe, this CWG gave birth to the Better Schools Programme Zimbabwe (BSPZ).

The Better Schools Programme Zimbabwe (BSPZ)

The Better Schools Programme Zimbabwe (BSPZ) resulted from two main priority areas established by the CWG, the first being the insatiable demand for education soon after Zimbabwe independence in 1980, which led to the massive expansion of the education system (Zvobgo 1986), and second, the paradigm shift from quantity to quality and relevance in the provision of education (BSPZ 2000). The Ministry of Education responded to these two concerns by introducing several initiatives including the BSPZ.

The BSPZ was based on resource centres, because in a rapidly changing world, it is essential that teachers and school heads be provided with systematic access to modern teaching techniques, new ideas and updated teaching and learning materials (BSPZ 2000). To fulfill these ambitions, the BSPZ objectives include:

- Providing teacher support, on-going professional service opportunities to meet and discuss national curricular goals and to translate these into relevant learning experiences.
- Providing focal points for disseminating skills and ideas related to management, planning, and curriculum, teaching and learning methods.
- Providing refresher courses, which promote continuous improvement of the teaching/learning process and keep teachers in touch with developments in the profession (BSPZ 2000: 2).

The focal point for the attainment of these goals is the resource centre. BSPZ (2000) says Resource Centres in Zimbabwe are information and training centres which have been established as vehicles to improve the quality and relevance of education. Resource centres are organized from school, to cluster (a cluster is a group of about six schools that are within the same locality), to district, to region and finally to the National Resource Centre.

The *National Resource Centre* provides policy and guidelines, carries out research, develops training materials, monitors and evaluates BSPZ activities. *Regional Resource Centres* identify training needs, facilitate INSET programmes for districts, provide facilitators, carry out research and draw up regional action plans.

District Resource Centres, among other things, organize district training programmes, provide library facilities, Internet facilities, conference facilities, develop teaching and learning materials and act as information centres for the district.

Cluster Resource Centres, among other things, identify training needs, organize subject panels, organize peer tutoring, conduct action research, organize group studies and group visits, provide community service and inducts new teachers and heads.

School Resource Centres, among other things, conduct school-based INSET, identify teachers training needs, provide shared equipment, develop teaching and learning materials, organize demonstration lessons and conduct action research.

The beneficiaries of resource centres are students, teachers, school heads, members of the community, the business community, non-governmental organizations, institutions of higher learning and other government departments.

Resource centres are hubs of learning excellence in schools, districts, clusters, regions and at the national level. Their performance is measured against set objectives and evaluation is on-going in the form of formative evaluation. The BSPZ programme compliments other head teacher training programmes discussed earlier and the benefits to the schools are immense as indicated below.

Lessons for Leadership for Learning

The objectives of the programmes discussed in the previous sections revolve around arguably, the most important and key figure in the school, the head. It is argued that no school can operate well without a competent head, because he/she is the person who makes the school a successful enterprise. Effective school heads are not necessarily born with the skill and traits they need; they can also acquire management competencies that will ensure school effectiveness. Meanwhile, the role of school heads has increased to include a staggering array of professional tasks and competencies (Davies et al. 2005). In Zimbabwe, school heads are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community leaders, public relations officers and communications experts, budget analysts, facility managers, custodians of orphans and vulnerable children, donor programme coordinators, as well as guardians of various legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives (Peterson 2002; Baugh 2003; HMIE 2007a). They have to balance the often conflicting needs and interests of many stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, district education officers, teacher unions, and provincial and national authorities. As a result, many scholars and practitioners argue that the job requirements far exceed the reasonable capacities of any one person. The demands of the job have changed so that traditional methods of preparing administrators are no longer adequate to meet the leadership challenges posed by public schools (Peterson 2002; Levine 2005; HMIE 2007b). In this context, there are lessons that can be drawn out of Zimbabwe's head teacher training initiatives.

Striving for Quality Through School Leadership Teams

One noticeable area of reform in schools is the decentralization of responsibility and authority from head office to schools and in the schools from the heads to teachers. Decentralization became easier to implement when the Ministry was able to trust

the capacity of heads to take the challenges associated with it, usually after they had undergone degree level training offered by the Zimbabwe Open University and other universities. This was done with teamwork in mind to form a framework for professional mentoring, collaborative working and establishing a culture in which each and every staff member felt valued. Shared decision-making became the cornerstone of school governance in schools whose leaders made sure each team player was as important as the other. Shared decision making and collaboration are important to the success of schools (Leithwood et al. 2006). Recognizing and praising positive implementation efforts was also felt in schools. Emphasis was placed on the head's role as a decision maker and as educational leader in the enhancement of school improvement and quality learning.

School leadership teams were formed in schools under the banner of the National Association of Primary School Heads (NAPH) and the National Association of Secondary School Heads (NASH). With this move, *collaborative school improvement councils* served as leadership consortiums and were mandated to ensure shared authority to empower teachers. Leadership became diffused so that leaders became invisible in those schools. Plans began to evolve as a result of increased interactions of the head and staff. Staff felt more commitment and support with their involvement.

The concept of parallel leadership (McGlade 2009) saw some schools take part in teacher leadership training. Parallel leadership provides a powerful model for effective leadership by a body of professional leaders as opposed to a body of professionals being led. Staff was being encouraged to actively and meaningfully contribute to school decisions to enable the school to achieve its vision and mission.

'Taking charge' became a buzzword in schools. Teams of professionals took control of issues such as class allocations, timetabling, creating management structures, leading innovations, and taking control of school resources. It had the hint of distributed leadership (Bennett et al. 2003; Spillane 2006), and teacher leadership (Murphy 2005) and was underpinned by an understanding that, as schools become more complex places to manage and lead, there is a need for more leaders than never before.

The influence on pupil learning was substantial in schools. School leaders in Zimbabwe have a lot of which to be proud. They have led the implementation of a series of major national initiatives like Child Friendly Schools, Better Environmental Science Teaching (BEST) and HIV and AIDS education, during which time levels of pupil performance have improved.

Hubs of Networking for School Improvement

At the core of leadership training in Zimbabwe is the belief that schools acting alone and without real engagement with other heads, then teachers and their communities cannot achieve the greatest possible improvement and transformation in learning. The growth and sustainability of school leadership is reliant on diverse

quality networks (Avolio and Gardner 2005), shared understandings, contextual sensitivities and the interconnectedness of individual school leaders (Bennis 2004), school clusters, districts, regions and at the national level. Examples of such networks are the Girl Child Network, the National Association of Primary School Heads (NAPH), the National Association of Secondary School Heads (NASH), the Forum for Women Educators in Zimbabwe (FAWEZI) and Child Friendly Schools. The different types and forms of networks are vital in connecting school communities. The aim was to build a connected, united and powerful school leadership, where the key thrust of networking is to create a culture of collaboration. When school heads work together, collaborate and interconnect, sustainable communities thrive (Fullan in Scott 2009). These networks promoted collaboration characterized by shared understandings through trust, shared purpose and the sharing of craft competence. Connolly and James (2006) argue that the secret behind school improvement is collaboration and HMIE (2007b) confirmed that if all our children are to develop and use their potential to the fullest extent, and contribute to a world-class economy, then providers of education, training and related services must work together.

The school clusters that came out of the BSPZ programme also embarked on collaborative inquiry. Collaborative inquiry can be defined as a particular example of school-based research (Street and Temperley 2005). It differs from other school-based research that is sometimes based on individual inquiry. Collaborative inquiry, the bedrock of school clusters, involves professionals who choose to come together in a cluster in a school or in a district to investigate and contribute more to their practice with the aim of helping children learn. Through a number of professional learning activities designed to support sustainable curriculum change, participating heads engaged their staff and community in whole-curriculum reforms for the betterment of children.

Mushrooming of Effective Schools

Examination of school change stories after the leadership initiatives almost always reported the same outcome: an energetic and proactive, enthusiastic and committed, school head, who is striving for school effectiveness. The heads took a linking agent role and brought with them new ideas and information for the staff to use with students. This contributed to successful school reforms and the mushrooming of effective schools supported by the Ministry of Education through working alongside the head to strengthen leadership capacity, to improve the quality of teacher practice and ultimately the effectiveness and efficiency of the school.

School effectiveness was fostered by increasing teacher's abilities to share in managing at the school, cluster or district levels, where teachers were given an opportunity to share their areas of interest, undeveloped potential and career aspirations. The need for effective leadership at all levels of the school was confirmed by HMIE (2007a, b) who pointed out that leaders are not just at the top of an organization;

most effective organizations have strong leaders at every level. Distributing leadership can ameliorate some of the workload issues which are currently faced by school heads in Zimbabwe. It makes the role of head more attractive and the size of the job more deliverable (Levine 2005; Day et al. 2006), as it encompasses a shared approach to school leadership in which professionals throughout the school are genuinely engaged and can influence school culture, ethos and students learning.

Effective schools developed even in remote areas. The schools adopted the philosophy of continuous improvement and excellence. These schools were not satisfied by their teachers' performance or the performance of their students and strived for excellence through informed leadership based on continuous improvement and school-based leadership internship (Baugh 2003).

Creating Centres of Excellence

Resource centres created the right conditions for school leaders to network and play a role in facilitating contacts for their schools. In this way, they acted as centres of excellence by disseminating information on good practice, encouraging dialogue between interested parties and setting up and supporting head teacher forums for leading excellence. The centres also kept heads updated with the latest developments in education and provided coaching using experienced practitioners to extend knowledge and widen the focus beyond the immediacy of a particular school.

Extensive use of target setting is being developed at all levels to plan and monitor change including succession planning (Fink and Brcyman 2006). Each school is required to set challenging targets for with clusters monitoring the progress of their schools and helping heads and their schools to meet targets. Each year schools are inspected and the best schools are awarded a secretary's merit award, given to a school that has made the most improvement in a particular year, based on infrastructure development, meeting set standards and student performance in the academic, sporting and social arena. The schools that excel in the peer reviews serve as reference points and act as centres of excellence.

Peer Coaching

Resource centres are hubs where contacts are made between aspiring, new and experienced school heads and they are linked to high quality leadership first hand and gain practical experience under close supervision. A *critical friend* (a partnership between an experienced head and a newly appointed one) concept leads to long-term solutions for the attraction, retention and support of school leaders. Proper coaching, assistance and support from colleagues became a way of stimulating learning for educational leaders (Daresh 2001).

Coaching and assistance from fellow heads is very useful in pointing out new alternatives. Countless opportunities for leadership learning were created as heads interacted with their peers and shared information on how to provide quality education for pupils. Leadership programmes alone could not help trainee heads to conceptualize and appreciate the mammoth task awaiting them or to begin the necessary socialization process, but their peers could. Heads arranged for staff to be assisted by peers, getting help and support from fellow colleagues, as they encouraged participants to open up and embrace change.

Investing in Continuous Staff Development

One of the strongest themes to emerge from the Zimbabwe Open University's programme is the importance of developing staff and nurturing talent (Hargreaves and Fink 2006; Connolly and James 2006; Wong 2006).The initiatives equipped school leaders with the tools to lead continuous improvement in schools. Many implementation efforts in schools stall and fail because staff has not been trained in new skills, when their skills have been overtaken by events or they have become less competent over time, leading to frustration and discontentment that may undercut implementation efforts. The leadership training showed that learning should be part of a continuous process involving formal study and field-based learning. The process of leadership learning in Zimbabwe was regarded as continuous and progressive, providing continuous personal and professional development. Harris et al. (2003) pointed to the importance of a variety of different factors for retaining the skills of school leaders, including providing effective opportunities for professional development and support.

The school networks promoted the achievement of quality in educational provision as head teacher development became continuous and intentional. It became a core activity of professional leaning for heads, building leadership capacity, improved efficiency and implementing a leadership succession plan. It closed the gap between authority and accountability by developing learning communities:

> An essential feature of the successful school in these changing times is the concept of a learning community where leaders and teachers, as well as students, are essentially learners, seeing learning as a major task for everyone (Whitby 2009: 24).

Apprenticeship for Headship

The training programmes led to the understanding that leadership is not confined to heads but occurs at many points in the school. The effectiveness of school leaders is measured as much by the performance of teachers and pupils, as by their own performance. A Zimbabwean school leader of a team, a department or a school needed to empower others to perform at their best. At various leadership forums

and in practice it was found that simple rewards and punishments no longer do the job: it takes employee involvement, shared purposes or vision, and, in general, a spirit of collaboration heretofore known in few organizations (Management 501 2000).

It needs to be kept in mind that in most cases leadership choices that fail to empower others are likely to be poor ones. Coercive approaches, while occasionally necessary and sometimes effective, rarely sustain positive effects for the long term (Levine 2005; Water and Grubb 2004). A realistic restructuring of the head's role and leadership positions across the school led to the deliberate positioning of deputy head, senior teacher and teacher-in-charge so that they served a preparatory ground or apprenticeship for headship. The allocation of responsibilities and tasks focused on both the needs of the school and the various personal and professional stages of the individual's career.

Evidence-Based School Leadership

There is a recognition that schools should be the ultimate learning organizations and be directed by evidence-based leadership, drawing upon research to improve their practice. Resource centres promoted research in order to identify and disseminate good practice, and experienced researchers taught heads the techniques of research-based management of schools. This created in school heads the capacity for autonomous professional self-development, self-interrogation and systematic self-study.

The centres nurtured a research culture in heads (Coleman 2005) that was passed on to the staff. Schools became centres for research initiatives that provided evidence to inform policy and practice. Each school and cluster has a teaching and research unit that organizes professional support for teachers, such as demonstration lessons (Wong 2006). An innovative idea that came out of these research thrusts included the idea of 'learning without fear'. This came as a result of research that discovered that child abuse was rampant in some schools. Research also led to the establishment of *child friendly schools* that promoted a safe learning environment for school children.

Challenges Faced

In spite of these efforts to improve leadership, 2000–2009 saw a reversal of some of the gains as a result of targeted sanctions, economic mismanagement and a chaotic land reform programme. The morale and motivation of teachers across schools in Zimbabwe fell to very low levels and commitment to the profession became weak, resulting in massive exodus of teachers and heads migrating to other countries. Instability is a powerful reason for the failure of many school

improvement initiatives. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) argue that one of the most obvious, and arguably the most frequent, is the instability of leadership in the form of frequent head and deputy head turnover. This was the case in Zimbabwe.

The State of Education in Zimbabwe in 2009

Zimbabwean education has gone through a particularly tough period in the past decade. It has moved from flourishing to near death. Effective school leadership and a culture of teaching and learning have been neglected for a decade and in some instances have virtually collapsed. During the period 2000–2008, the economic meltdown that saw Zimbabwe experiencing inflation running into millions destroyed the education system. Most schools were crippled by shortages leading to diminished work performance in schools. Much of the infrastructure in schools was neglected and there was nothing in the form of school maintenance. It was only in 2009 after a more stable peace settlement that was a result of a Global Political Agreement (GPA) that restoration began to take place.

The Government of National Unity (GNU) responded to the education collapse by appointing a National Educational Advisory Board (NEAB). The board quickly put into place the Rapid Assessment of Primary and Secondary Education (RAPSE) whose report, based on a sample of 120 schools, indicated that:

- 196,829 pupils enrolled in grade 7 in 2008 did not proceed to Form One.
- There was a 50% dropout in remote provinces like Matabeleland North.
- Zimbabwe has fallen woefully behind other Southern African Countries in providing free primary education.
- Teacher morale was at its lowest since independence owing to a number of challenges, chief among these being the system of managing and supporting teachers in professional matters.
- All secondary schools visited in Matabeleland North had practically collapsed (Neab 2009).

The board argued that such a large discrepancy in educational provision could be a politically, socially and economically destabilizing factor. The Herald (2009) also reported that in the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), 70% of prospective candidates for Ordinary and Advanced Level examinations did not register for the November 2009 examinations because they could not afford the fees.

UNICEF (2009) in partnership with other agencies made an independent enquiry. Their findings show that:

- Twenty percent of primary schools had no textbooks at all for English and Mathematics.
- The examination pass rate declined from 53% in 1999 to 33.5% in 2007.
- Fifty percent of primary school graduates were not proceeding to secondary school.

Formidable challenges appear to haunt the Zimbabwe education system, and identify the challenges faced by heads of schools. One teacher ably articulated:

> I am struggling to master one new technique I was never trained to do: getting pupils to concentrate while learning under a tree. (Shoko and Visimizi 2009: 5).

A long road to restoration lies ahead for school leaders.

Challenges of Resources

The Zimbabwean education system is undergoing vast changes owing to a decline in standards that were brought about by a decade of regression, where the challenges of change appear to cripple the system (Fink and Brcyman 2006). Insufficient classrooms, because buildings have been allowed to collapse (Neab 2009; UNICEF 2009), resulted in shift systems (called hot sitting in Zimbabwe). The task faced by heads to lead such a complex set of issues appears enormous, further worsened by the fact that most schools in rural areas do not have drinking water, adequate sanitary facilities or electricity. In 1996, the pupil-trained teacher ratio at primary level was 1 to 52 (Education Annual Report 1996). Very few heads are trained specifically to deal with these complex situations and in some places the situation had worsened in 2010, due to continuing economic challenges.

Salaries as low as USD 150 per month demotivate teachers (Neab 2009), together with a lack of security in rural areas (where teachers became victims of political violence in 2008), lack of accommodation and shortages of materials. However, teacher working conditions are student learning conditions (Hirsch 2004). School heads practices are severely strained yet are expected to influence individual sense of efficacy, organizational commitment, and help the staff develop an inspiring and shared sense of purpose (Day et al. 2006) under very unfriendly working conditions. They are expected to be collegial, considerate, supportive, and acknowledge and reward good work. This places considerable strain on the skills needed to run schools in Zimbabwe, where the self-efficacy of a school head is affected by the teaching environment (Smith et al. 2003).

Changing Roles of the Head

Teacher roles have changed and the head must be prepared for these changing roles. The cluster concept has encouraged the community into the education system, and community service is now one area that the head is expected to be engaged in. Schools in Zimbabwe embarked on the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) where schools are expected to change the culture of operations so they are safe places for children who will realize their potential in optimum conditions for the child to achieve (MoE 2010). The success of this programme rests on cooperation between

the school, the community and other stakeholders more than ever before. Students will be engaged in what Gard and Russell (2009) called service learning, a method of teaching, learning and reflecting that combines the curriculum with meaningful service in the community. Today's head has the responsibility to ensure that meaningful community service is integrated with instruction and reflection. One of the key principles of Child Friendly Schools (CFS) is inclusiveness (MoE 2010). It is a child-seeking school. The school identifies excluded children, and tries to get them back to school and include them in learning. Tied to Child Friendly Schools is the issue of effective learning which takes place when heads develop teacher proficiencies (MoE 2007) so that they have theoretical and practical knowledge with specific focus on learning/teaching activities and materials which promote active, creative and child-centred approaches to learning in a joyful classroom environment.

There are also challenges associated with the increased demands by the consumer for accountability, value for money and transparency. Heads need to understand their customers' quality requirements. It is critical to establish and maintain feedback mechanisms: on site surveys; telephone surveys; focus group meetings and so forth in order to maintain a consistent relationship with the customers. Customer's needs change overtime. If one is not in touch, the customers' needs may outdistance their capabilities (Doherty 1994).

Competition for students brings further dilemmas for heads of schools where they must sell the school to boost enrolments. In this regard, many Zimbabwean heads are finding themselves in new and unknown territory. Large enrolment is always associated with effectiveness because parents send their children to schools that perform.

Having different cultures in the school makes it difficult for heads to make resolutions that are right, fair, just, good and acceptable, with conflict between the school's values and the values taught in different ethnic and cultural groups. In Zimbabwe, this might appear a small problem as it affects a few international and private schools. Of particular concern is the difficulty of attracting and retaining women and members of minority ethnic groups, and the difficulty of filling positions in rural, remote and disadvantaged areas. Elsewhere, Howson (2006) reports that a lack of diversity in the school leadership in terms of gender and ethnic background was seen as one of the main reasons why recruitment and retention of school leaders is an issue.

Limited Capacity for Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection procedures for heads are also of concern. Chief among the concerns is the processes and standards by which the Ministry of Education screens, selects and promotes school heads. The procedures are often ill-defined, irregularly applied, and lacking in rigour (HMIE 2007a and NPBEA, in Davies et al. 2005). As a result, many aspiring teachers are too easily admitted into

and passed through the system on the basis of their performance on academic coursework rather than on a comprehensive assessment of the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to successfully lead schools. Although these aspiring teachers are certified, they may not be equipped for the complex role of the school head, from manager on the one hand, to effective instructional leader, on the other.

Succession Planning

It is important that the education system ensures that they have sufficient people with appropriate skills, attitudes and knowledge to take schools into the future. In this case, succession planning is now a high priority in the Zimbabwe education system. There is need for talent spotting of young teachers and monitoring mechanisms for senior teachers. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) conceive succession planning in the public sector to be less strategic than in the private sector, regarded as more of a cost than a strategic investment in the future. This appears to be the case in Zimbabwe, but identifying and developing the leaders of the future is becoming increasingly important as a means of building capacity. The need for a well-designed succession planning is a key to successful school leadership. Blunt (2004) argues the need for growing good leaders is a large and often misunderstood challenge, one that is generally not well addressed in a systematic fashion. Fullan (2003) further argues that the development of leaders of the future is a key function of current leaders because the success of school leaders should be measured, not in terms of their impact on student achievement scores during their tenure, but rather on how many leaders they developed and left behind to fly the educational flag.

Lifeline for Leadership for Learning in Zimbabwe

In November 2009, UNICEF launched a US 70 million Educational Transition Fund (ETF) that will aim to ensure quality education for the country's children. Hopefully, enhancing the capacity and understanding of heads of schools so that they play a critical role of promoting quality education for all children in Zimbabwe will be revived. Educators across Zimbabwe acknowledge the need for Zimbabwean school children to have the necessary pre-requisites to live and work in a global economy. There is widespread agreement that with visionary leadership in schools this can be achieved.

Next to the revitalization of school leadership, there is a need for well-prepared and motivated teachers. Recognizing the complexity of translating educational ideals into action, better leadership training alone will not solve Zimbabwe's leadership challenges. Well trained school heads in near-impossible job conditions are not likely to succeed in improving learning (Davies et al. 2005). The teachers organizations in Zimbabwe such as the Zimbabwe Teachers' Association (ZIMTA) and

the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) acknowledged (2009) the complexity of Zimbabwe's education system and demanded that school heads have access to new kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes; to budget, deploy staff accordingly, supervise instruction and assess progress among other duties. There is widespread agreement that there needs to be a fundamental rethinking of the content, structure, delivery and assessment of leadership if learning is to be achieved (DES 2007; HMIE 2007a; Leithwood et al. 2006).

Conclusion

There are lessons to be learned from the training of school heads in Zimbabwe. If the aim is to educate school leaders to influence student learning then collaboration is needed so that schools can ensure the future of all children through informed and principled leadership. Schools must be linked to the different sections of the community it serves if the educational outcomes for all children are to be maximized. The demand for professional education managers is growing and poses an enormous challenge to the education system, so there is a need to demonstrate political will and the ability to work together for the good of all. Heads in Zimbabwe are willing and ready to play their part in the development of this global village.

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Part V
Implementing Leadership for Learning:
The Role of the School Leader

Chapter 27
Collaborative Leadership and School Improvement: Understanding the Impact on School Capacity and Student Learning*

Philip Hallinger and Ronald H. Heck

Introduction

Over the past 50 years, scholars in Europe (Bell et al. 2003; Krüger et al. 2007; Southworth 2002; van de Grift 1990; Witziers et al. 2003), North America (Bossert et al. 1982; Gross and Herriott 1965; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Heck and Hallinger 2009; Leithwood et al. 2010; Marks and Printy 2003; Pounder et al. 1995; Wiley 2001), and the Asia Pacific (Caldwell 1998; Cheng 1994; Mulford and Silins 2009; Robinson et al. 2008) have sought to understand if and how leadership contributes to school improvement and more specifically to student learning (Heck and Hallinger 2005). This research generally supports the conclusion that leadership contributes to learning through the development of a set of structural and socio-cultural processes that define the school's capacity for academic improvement (Hallinger et al. 1996; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Heck et al. 1990; Leithwood et al. 2010; Robinson et al. 2008; Southworth 2002).

Although this finding offers encouragement to policymakers and practitioners, this research has relied largely upon cross-sectional surveys of principal effectiveness and case studies of school improvement (Heck and Hallinger 2005; Reynolds et al. 2000). Neither research design offers a satisfactory approach for understanding *how leadership contributes to school improvement*. Thus, we assert that gaining deeper insight into this issue requires longitudinal data that describe changes in school processes and outcomes in a substantial number of schools over time (Hallinger 2003; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Reynolds et al. 2000; Southworth 2002).

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This chapter describes findings from a series of related quantitative studies in which we sought to understand how leadership contributes to school capacity for improvement and student learning. Scholars have framed the 'elusive search' (Witziers et al. 2003) for a link between leadership and learning through a variety of contrasting perspectives. In this chapter, we compare four conceptual perspectives or models:

- *A direct-effects model* in which leadership is conceptualized as the primary driver for changes in student learning;
- *A mediated-effects model* in which leadership drives growth in student learning by shaping and strengthening the school's capacity for improvement;
- *A reversed mediated-effects model* in which the school's results – i.e. changes in student learning outcomes – drive changes in school improvement capacity and leadership;
- *A reciprocal-effects model* in which leadership and school improvement capacity are conceptualized as a mutual influence process that contributes to growth student learning.

This report presents the results of analyses of a longitudinal dataset collected from 198 primary schools over a 4-year period in the USA. These data described student and teacher perceptions of collaborative leadership and school improvement capacity, as well as student achievement in reading and math.[1] The analyses that we report here compared the efficacy of these four models in accounting for patterns of change in leadership, school improvement capacity, and learning outcomes in the 198 schools. This effort represents, to our knowledge, the first comprehensive empirical test that explicitly compares these four conceptual models of school leadership effects on learning since they were proposed by Nancy Pitner (1988) more than 20 years ago.

Overview of the Research

Our approach to understanding the means by which leadership contributes to school improvement is framed by two assumptions. First, we assume that studies of *school improvement* must assess change (i.e. improvement or decline) in the school's academic processes and learning outcomes over a period of time. Although this observation may seem self-evident, we note that scholars have frequently opined on issues of school improvement based on the analysis of data that describe school performance at one point in time (Heck and Hallinger 2005; Reynolds et al. 2000).

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[1] Note that the general tests of the model reported in this chapter have been compared for both reading and math, and show a similar trend of results in both subjects. Some of the analyses reported in other related papers examined learning outcomes in mathematics or reading.

Second, we assume that *school improvement leadership* is directed towards growth in student learning. Scholars have rightfully suggested that a key role of leadership is to define the ends towards which the school will strive to improve, sometimes referred to as 'leadership for what?' Yet, even though schools must work towards a variety of goals, we take the position that school leadership must first and foremost be directed towards improvement of learning. These assumptions framed the conceptual models, selection of variables, and design for this research.

School Improvement Leadership

Empirical research finds that successful school leadership creates conditions that support effective teaching and learning and builds capacity for professional learning and change (Fullan 2001; Hallinger et al. 1996; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Heck et al. 1990; Leithwood et al. 2010; Marks and Printy 2003; Mulford and Silins 2009; Robinson et al. 2008; Wiley 2001). Over the past decade there has been increased interest in exploring the sources, means, and implications of viewing school leadership more broadly than that which is exercised by the principal (Gronn 2002; Leithwood et al. 2009; Ogawa and Bossert 1995). Although scholars have proposed meaningful distinctions between terms such as distributed (Gronn 2002; Spillane 2006), shared (Marks and Printy 2003; Pounder et al. 1995), and collaborative (Hallinger and Heck 2010) leadership, all three terms reflect a similar concern for broadening the sources of school leadership. The current study employed a conceptualization that we called collaborative leadership.

We suggest that collaborative leadership focuses on strategic school-wide actions directed towards school improvement that are shared among the principal, teachers, administrators, and others. In the context of this study, collaborative leadership entailed the use of governance structures and organizational processes that empowered staff and students, encouraged broad participation in decision-making, and fostered shared accountability for student learning. We note that the Hawaiian state education department had been actively promoting the use of school leadership teams as a means of fostering school improvement.

Increasing the school's capacity for improvement represents a key target of leadership efforts designed to impact teacher practice and student learning (Fullan 2001; Leithwood et al. 2010; Heck and Hallinger 2009; Robinson et al. 2008). In our research, we defined school improvement capacity as school conditions that support teaching and learning, enable the professional learning of the staff, and provide a means for implementing strategic actions aimed at continuous school improvement (Fullan 2001; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2010a, b; Hill and Rowe 1996; Leithwood et al. 2010; Mulford and Silins 2009; Stoll and Fink 1996). We sought to develop a dynamic picture of school improvement in this study by measuring teachers' perceptions of their school's collective leadership and related school improvement processes at several points in time. This information was used to define an 'improvement trajectory' that portrayed change in these processes for each school over a 4-year period of time.

Defining Conceptual Models of Leadership and Learning

It is only since the 1960s that scholars began to conceptualize and study school leadership as directed *explicitly* towards improvement in the quality of teaching (Gross and Herriott 1965). Subsequently, this focus was expanded to include the effects of principal leadership on student learning (Bossert et al. 1982; Hallinger and Heck 1996). In 1988, Pitner proposed several conceptual models that sought to explain the means by which leadership could impact student learning. A decade later, we elaborated on these models in a review of empirical research on principal leadership and student learning (Hallinger and Heck 1996). In this study, we test these models as a means of furthering our understanding of how collaborative leadership contributes to school improvement and student learning (Fig. 27.1). We note that in contrast to prior research in this domain, our proposed models are conceptualized as 'growth models' rather than 'static models'. Thus, Fig. 27.1 includes both the initial states of constructs as well as the changes in the constructs over time (shown as shaded rectangles).[2]

Direct-Effects Model (Leadership As the Driver for Change in Learning)

Early research in this field implicitly framed the relationship of principal leadership to learning as a direct-effects model. Some have termed this a 'heroic leadership' model in that it seeks to explain student learning outcomes solely in terms of the principal's leadership. Typically researchers employing this approach collected perceptions of principal leadership and student achievement across a set of schools and sought to determine if there were significant patterns in the relationship (Braughton and Riley 1991; O'Day 1983). In general studies, employing this type of model did not yield significant results, and scholars were subsequently discouraged from pursuing this path (Hallinger and Heck 1996). In our analysis of this model, we proposed that change in collaborative leadership might be directly related to change in student achievement, controlling for context factors such as student composition.

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[2] In growth formulations, it is common for the initial state of each variable to be correlated with its growth, or change, over time (shown with two-headed arrows in the figure). Correlations have no causal interpretation. The models presented in Fig. 27.1 are also multilevel, in that each includes a within-school model explaining the effects of student background variables on their achievement growth trajectories.

Model 1: Direct Effects Where Leadership Drives Change in Learning
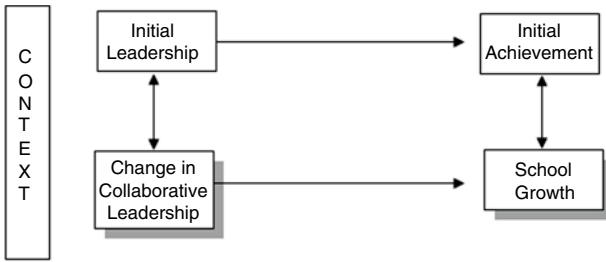
Model 2: Mediated Effects Where Leadership Drives Change in Improvement Capacity
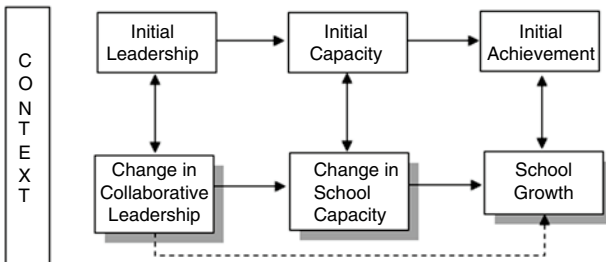
note: ----> Path tested but not expected to be significant

Model 3: Mediated Effects Where School Growth is the Driver for Change
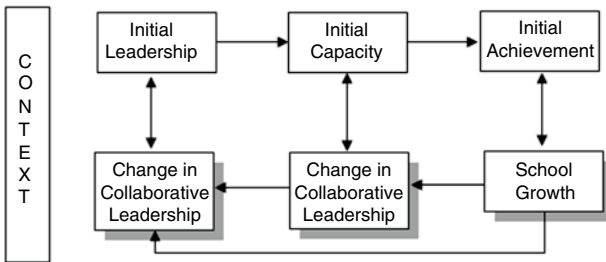
Model 4: Reciprocal Effects Where Leadership is a Mutual Influence Process
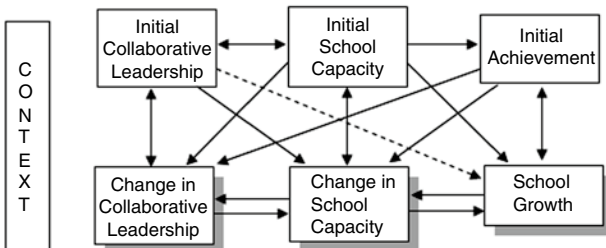
note: ----> Path tested but not expected to be significant

Fig. 27.1 Conceptual models of leadership effects

Mediated-Effects Model (Leadership as the Driver for Change in Capacity)

Given the disappointing results of the direct-effects studies, scholars increasingly adopted models that conceptualized the relationship between leadership and learning as mediated by school-level organizational structures and processes that we have referred to as 'school improvement capacity' (Cheng 1994; Hallinger et al. 1996; Heck et al. 1990; Leithwood and Jantzi 1999; Marks and Printy 2003; Wiley 2001). Although these studies continued to frame leadership as a driver for school effectiveness and improvement, they proposed indirect rather than direct effects of leadership on learning (see Model 2 in Fig. 27.1). As noted earlier, these indirect effects of principal leadership on student learning are achieved through shaping the school's capacity for academic improvement (Bell et al. 2003; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Leithwood et al. 2010; Robinson et al. 2008; Southworth 2002). This model assumes that changes in leadership and capacity for improvement which take place at the school level produce 'trickle down' effects on teacher classroom behaviour and student learning (Hallinger and Heck 2010; Leithwood et al. 2010; Mulford and Silins 2009). The reader will, however, note that we did not directly test this assumption in this research.

Reversed Mediated-Effects Model (Change in Learning Outcomes Drive Changes in Capacity and Leadership)

While virtually all mediated-effects studies have explicitly framed leadership as the driver for school improvement, one could also conceptualize change in school results (improvement or decline) as providing the impetus for changes in school capacity and leadership as shown in Model 3 (Heck and Hallinger 2010a). It is noteworthy that explicit discussions of this mediated-effects model are rare in the leadership literature. However, we observe that scholars have *tacitly* acknowledged the possibility of this model when they have questioned the direction of the causal relationship between leadership and learning in cross-sectional studies of principal effects (Heck and Hallinger 2005; Luyten et al. 2005; Witziers et al. 2003). Given our interest in exploring all possible avenues of effects, we included this conceptual model in our own empirical analyses.

Reciprocal-Effects Model (Mutual Influence Creates Paths to Improvement in Learning)

In our 1996 review of the principal effects literature, we noted: 'To the extent that leadership is viewed as an adaptive process rather than as a unitary independent

force, the reciprocal-effects perspective takes on increased salience' (Hallinger and Heck 1996, p. 19). A reciprocal-effects model implies that the variables (e.g. leadership, school improvement capacity, student learning) *mutually influence each other over time* (Marsh and Craven 2006).

This type of reciprocal influence is shown in two ways in Model 4 (Fig. 27.1). First, the concept of a mutually reinforcing system suggests that the initial status of each variable will explain subsequent change in the other two variables (see the arrows from the top static portion of the model to the lower growth portion). Second, we highlight an indirect feedback loop between the growth factors. This suggests first, as in Model 2, that changes in leadership are likely to influence capacity and growth in learning (indirectly) over time. However, it further proposes that the *total or combined effects* of collaborative leadership within the school actually increase (or decrease) as a function of changes occurring in improvement capacity and student achievement (see Heck and Hallinger 2010a). Expressed differently, we propose that the *interaction over time* between leadership and capacity building will produce effects on learning beyond the separate effects of either construct observed at any arbitrary point in time. This formulation of Model 4 is consistent with Ogawa and Bossert's (1995) proposition that leadership is an 'organizational property' that can increase (or decrease) in both strength and impact over time.

For example, the work of school leaders at any given point in time is shaped by the culture of the school. As leaders initiate changes in work structures, management processes, curriculum, community relations, and instructional practices, they do so with the constraints, resources, and opportunities afforded by the school's current capacity for improvement in mind. As these conditions that describe the school's academic capacity change over time, theories would suggest that effective leadership behaviour will adapt in response (Fiedler 1967; Glover et al. 2002; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Kimberly and Miles 1980; Ogawa and Bossert 1995; Pitner 1988). Moreover, our model suggests that the strength of leadership and its impact on learning will be further moderated by the changing conditions of the school, for better or worse.

Reciprocal influence and related concepts of responsive adaptation, mutual influence, and leader–follower interaction are implied in various leadership theories (Bass, and Avolio 1994; Bridges 1977; Fiedler 1967). However, progress in testing conceptual models that imply reciprocal causation has been hindered by methodological challenges. Reciprocal-effects models explicitly propose that behavioural adaptation unfolds over time (Bass and Avolio 1994; Glover et al. 2002; Hallinger and Heck 1996; Kimberly and Miles 1980; Marsh and Craven 2006; Ogawa and Bossert 1995). Suitable longitudinal data are, however, difficult to obtain, especially on a scale sufficient to assess the effects of leadership across comparable organizational units (Tate 2008). Moreover, until recently, we lacked analytical tools capable of modelling reciprocal effects over time (Griffin 1997; Heck and Hallinger 2005; Marsh and Craven 2006; Tate 2008).

Research Focus and Method

The purpose of this programme of research was to seek insights into how collaborative school leadership contributes to school improvement. For the purposes of this particular report, we seek both to synthesize and extend previous analyses that assessed the efficacy of these four models. Therefore, in this section we describe the main features of the research and the specific analyses conducted for our model testing. We refer the reader to other more detailed treatments for additional information on the research methodology (see Hallinger and Heck 2010; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2010a, b).

A sample of 198 elementary schools was randomly selected from the population of elementary schools in Hawaii.[3] Within those schools, a longitudinal cohort consisting of all third-grade students within the schools ($N=13,000+$) participated in the study. The study utilized longitudinal survey data on leadership and school improvement capacity collected from teachers on three occasions over a 4-year period (year 1, year 3 and year 4) to compare the efficacy of four models in explaining relationships to growth in student achievement in reading and math. Data on individual students' achievement were collected in year 2, year 3, and year 4. At each measurement occasion, the data from school surveys preceded the student achievement data.

Student background controls in the within-schools portion of the models included gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special education status, English language status, and student mobility. School context indicators (student composition, teacher experience, principal stability, teacher professional certification) described initial school contexts during the first year of the study (2002–2003) and were used to control for differences among schools.

Collaborative leadership was measured by nine items describing teacher perceptions of leadership processes within the school. The items captured three dimensions of the school's leadership: make collaborative decisions focusing on educational improvement, emphasize school governance that empowers staff and students; encourage commitment, broad participation, and shared accountability for student learning; emphasize broad participation in efforts to evaluate the school's academic development.

We operationalized school improvement capacity from among a set of eight subscales. While different combinations of subscales were used in the different studies, the overall trend was similar (Hallinger and Heck 2010; Heck and Hallinger 2010a, b). These subscales described the extent to which the school has educational programmmes that are aligned to state curriculum standards, seeks ways to implement programmes that promote student achievement over time, develops systems of communication, involves staff in educational decision-making, has a

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[3] The total sample in the prior reports ranged from 194 to 202 schools.

well-developed range of academic and social support services for students, and has a professional teaching staff well qualified for assignments and responsibilities and committed to the school's purpose.

We defined growth in student learning as changes in the math and reading scores of a cohort of students over a 3-year period (grades 3–5). Longitudinal assessment of individual students' growth is considered to be superior to comparing successive student cohorts (e.g. percentages of third graders who attain proficiency) for the purpose of monitoring school improvement. Monitoring the progress of individual students over time captures the actual growth of these students as they move through their educational careers. This focuses attention more squarely on the experiences of specific students attending a particular school over several years and provides a way of recognizing that schools serve students who start at different places and progress at different rates (Seltzer et al. 2003).

In this set of analyses we used latent change analysis (LCA), a type of structural equation modelling used for investigating longitudinal data, to test our proposed models. Our approach entailed analysing and comparing the efficacy of the four conceptual models. Statistical analyses were used to determine both the significance of relationships and various indicators of model fit (see Heck and Hallinger 2010a).

Results

Figure 27.2 summarizes the results of our model testing. All proposed models fit the data adequately as determined by model-fitting criteria.[4] In the figure, we focus on the key paths summarizing the major propositions associated with each model (these were tested at the 0.05 level of significance).

Model 1 posited that change in collaborative leadership exerts direct effects on growth in student learning. Our analyses that assessed this relationship for both reading and math, however, failed to support this hypothesis. Thus, consistent with earlier reviews of school leadership effects studies (e.g. Hallinger and Heck 1996), and we conclude that this approach is a 'dry hole' for exploring leadership effects on learning in schools (see also Hallinger and Heck 2010; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2010b).

Our test of Model 2 assessed the efficacy of a mediated-effects framework that posited change in collaborative leadership as the driver for change in school capacity and student learning. The three main findings of our analysis of the longitudinal data were consistent with earlier cross-sectional studies of principal leadership effects (e.g. Hallinger et al. 1996; Heck et al. 1990; Wiley 2001). First, change in

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[4] For example, the comparative fit index (CFI), which compares the adequacy of each proposed model against a 'poor-fitting' model, should be above 0.95 for an adequate model fit to the data (with 1.0 indicating a perfect fit). In all models tested, the CFI coefficients were 0.99.

Model 1: Direct Effects Where Leadership Drives Change in Learning
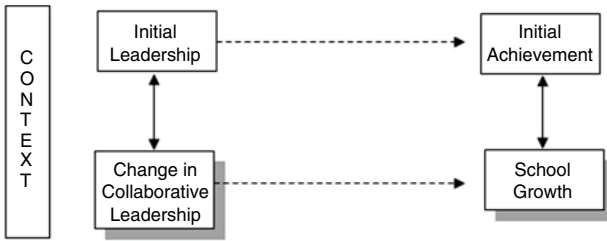
Model 2: Mediated Effects Where Leadership Drives Change in Improvement Capacity
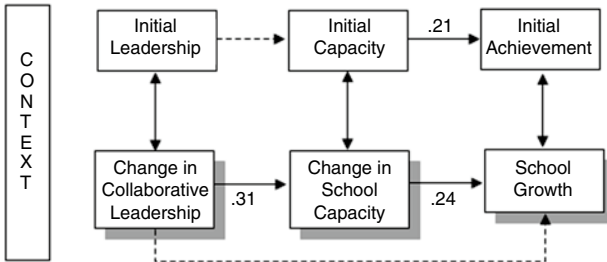
Model 3: Mediated Effects Where School Growth Drives Change in Capacity and Leadership
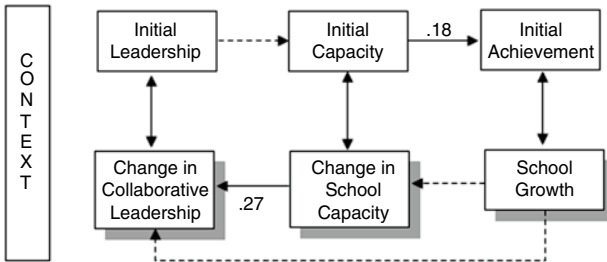
Model 4: Reciprocal Effects Where Leadership is a Mutual Influence Process
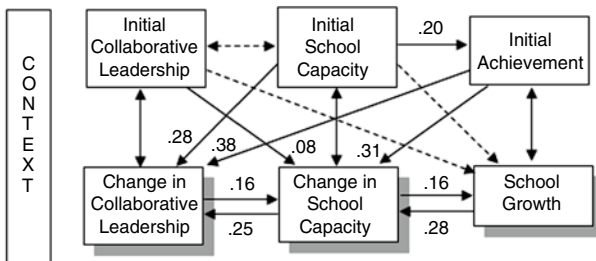
Note:--▶ Path was tested but not found to be significant, p> .05.

Fig. 27.2 Results of empirical testing

collaborative leadership was positively related to change in school capacity. Second, change in school improvement capacity positively affected growth in math. Finally, we found a small, positive *indirect* relationship between changes in collaborative leadership and growth in student learning in reading and math.

We wish to highlight the fact that these results both reinforce and extend findings from prior cross-sectional studies of principal effects. The use of longitudinal data made it possible to establish both the significance and stability of relationships among these constructs at several points in time. When compared with previous research, this increases our confidence that a causal – though indirect – relationship may indeed exist between school leadership and learning.

Analysis of the data did not support the efficacy of Model 3. School growth in learning outcomes did not appear to serve as a driver for change in school improvement capacity and collaborative leadership. Change in capacity, however, was predictive of change in collaborative leadership. Model 3 offered little leverage in understanding the dynamics in these relationships as they evolved over time.

Model 4 provided even stronger evidence in support of a reciprocal-effects perspective on leadership and school improvement (Heck and Hallinger 2010a). Initial achievement was positively related to subsequent changes in both collaborative leadership and school improvement capacity. However, the converse was not true; neither initial levels of leadership nor initial levels of school improvement capacity were directly related to subsequent growth in achievement. These findings provide empirical support for the premise that schools can improve learning outcomes regardless of their initial achievement levels by changing key organizational processes such as leadership and school improvement capacity. In addition, initial school improvement capacity positively affected subsequent changes in leadership, and initial collaborative leadership positively affected subsequent changes in school improvement capacity. This suggests that leadership and school improvement capacity were part of a mutually reinforcing relationship in which growth in one led to positive change in the other.

Finally, our analysis confirmed the existence of an indirect feedback loop between leadership and learning in the context of this reciprocal-effects model (Heck and Hallinger 2010a). More specifically, change in collaborative leadership was related positively to change in school improvement capacity, and change in school improvement capacity was positively related to student growth in reading and math. This is consistent with the change portion of Model 2. Conversely, however, we noted that changes in school learning growth were also positively related to changes in school improvement capacity, and changes in school improvement capacity were positively related to changes in collaborative leadership. This more complex pattern of mutual causation would be missed in previous mediating-effects studies such as Model 2 or Model 3.

Our test of Model 4, therefore, supported the proposition that changes in collaborative leadership and school improvement capacity are mutually reinforcing processes. Changes in the schools appeared to 'gain momentum' over time through changes in leadership and school improvement capacity that were organic and mutually responsive. The presence of the indirect feedback loop implies that the

total effects of variables such as leadership can increase as the sum of repeated cycles of influence between the component variables over time (Hayduk 2009). Moreover, we found that the effect of school improvement capacity on collaborative leadership was *stronger* over time than the corresponding effect of collaborative leadership on improvement capacity.

We wish to note that our most recent (unpublished) analyses have found that the same trend of Model 4 results held when a fourth wave of survey data was added into the dataset. This further increases our confidence in the findings since each additional year of data allows us to further establish the predictive validity of the model. Although this approach to model testing still lacks the power of experimental research designs, we believe that the longitudinal research design employed in this research enabled us to achieve an incremental advance in research on leadership effects on school improvement.

Discussion

Research has made important advances in the past several decades at clarifying and elaborating how leadership contributes to learning in schools. A recent meta-analysis conducted by Robinson and her colleagues (2008) reinforced a developing consensus among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners that 'leadership makes a difference' in the quality of learning in schools. Nonetheless, despite the scientific aura of meta-analysis, it is still essential to acknowledge critical limitations in the studies that formed the underlying knowledge base. Two key limitations were a reliance on cross-sectional surveys and an almost exclusive focus on leadership by the principal. Our research sought to address these limitations in order to illuminate more clearly the contribution that collaborative leadership makes to school improvement.

The analysis of a longitudinal dataset collected over a period of 4 years in a large number of primary schools enabled us to explore how the relationship between collaborative leadership and learning in schools changed over time. The nature of this longitudinal dataset allowed us to employ statistical methods that were capable of shedding light on *patterns of change* in these complex organizational processes over time. The focus on collaborative leadership offered an opportunity to determine the extent to which prior findings about principal leadership also applied to collaborative leadership.

Conclusions

The study yielded the following conclusions:

- Analyses of Model 2 found small but statistically significant indirect effects of leadership on learning. In this model collaborative leadership was a driver for

change in school improvement capacity and produced indirectly impacted growth in student learning (Hallinger and Heck 2010; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2010b).

- Although this mediated-effects model produced significant findings, a variety of statistical analyses clearly suggested that the reciprocal-effects model (Model 4) provided a more robust and comprehensive explanation the pattern of change in the relationships over time (Heck and Hallinger 2010a).
- The pattern of findings related to the reciprocal-effects model further suggested that changes in collaborative leadership compounded over time through an indirect feedback loop consisting of changes in school improvement capacity and growth in student math achievement (Heck and Hallinger 2010a).
- We also noted that leadership effects on school improvement capacity were smaller over time than corresponding effects of changes in school improvement capacity on changes in collaborative leadership (Heck and Hallinger 2010a).

Thus, the overall pattern of results favoured a perspective on school improvement leadership as a mutual influence or reciprocal process. This is a potentially important finding in that we believe that the reciprocal-effects model is also the most theoretically compelling of the four models. It does not make untenable assumptions about the heroic role of leadership, and presents leadership for learning in dynamic relationship with other organizational processes. More specifically, these findings offer insight into how both external events (e.g. resource allocations, policy sanctions) and internally driven planned reforms (e.g. developing curriculum and classroom instruction) may influence stakeholders' evolving perceptions of leadership in systematic ways. The model also draws attention to how changes in collaborative leadership mediated the effects of initial organizational conditions (i.e. achievement levels, improvement capacity) on subsequent changes observed in improvement capacity and growth in student learning. Thus, this model captures the dynamic and responsive nature of leadership for learning.

Implications

This report has sought both to retrace and extend the intellectual lineage in school leadership effects research. We believe that this research offers relevant commentary on several important issues concerning research, practice, and policy in school improvement. Here we briefly highlight potential contributions of this research to these domains.

First, the research demonstrates the importance of longitudinal data and the viability of using structural equation modelling in efforts to monitor and analyse change processes in schools over time. As seen in another recent study that employed longitudinal data (Mulford and Silins 2009), this approach offers considerable advantages over cross-sectional research designs when researchers are

seeking to explore causal relationships. Thus, we strongly advise researchers and relevant funding agencies to invest in developing and employing such databases in future research on school improvement.

Second, from the perspective of leadership practice, the research supports the view that school improvement leadership is highly contextualized. The type of leadership exercised by the principal and the school's leadership team must be linked both to the school's profile of learning results and improvement capacity at any point in time. Elsewhere we have discussed the notion that every school is on its own unique 'improvement trajectory' (Hallinger and Heck 2010). Accordingly, leaders must be ready to adapt their strategies to changing conditions at different stages in the journey of school improvement (Hallinger 2003; Jackson 2000). We believe that the finding that leadership and capacity building operate as a mutual influence process lends further weight to this perspective on leadership as a highly responsive and contextualized relational process.

Building on this point, we further suggest that this research offers a more comprehensive perspective on how leadership contributes to learning in schools. The research implies that while leadership acts as a catalyst for school improvement, both the nature of leadership as well as its impact are shaped by both historical and current conditions in the school. Academic structures (e.g. curriculum standards, team-based collaboration), school norms (e.g. tangible support for students and teachers, professional learning, open communication), and ongoing organizational processes (e.g. opportunities for participation in decision-making, resource allocation, external policies) create both opportunities and constraints for leadership (Bridges 1977). Effective leadership for school improvement must be responsive to these contextual characteristics. Our findings indicated that at each point in time, the impact of the school's culture on leadership was greater than vice versa. We suggest that this offers a more refined picture of how leadership actually operates in schools (Bridges 1977).

This last point is the proper point of departure for understanding the implications of our research for policymakers. During the 1980s research on effective schools served up the conclusion that 'leadership makes a difference' in schools. Subsequently, this finding became a hammer in the hands of policymakers for whom all educational problems began to look like nails. While our research reaffirms the importance of leadership as a catalyst for school improvement, it also qualifies this assertion in three important ways.

First, it suggests that no single approach to leadership will work to improve all schools. Effective leadership style and strategies are highly contextualized. They must be responsive both to the 'initial state' of the school's academic capacity and learning outcomes, and to changes in these conditions as they develop (or decline) over time.

Second, this research suggests that leadership, while a potentially important driver for change, is by itself insufficient to bring about improvement in learning outcomes. With this in mind, the school's culture, or capacity for educational improvement, becomes one key target for change interventions *in concert with efforts to strengthen leadership*. Indeed, the findings suggest that leadership and

school improvement capacity operate as part of a set of systemic relationships. Focusing on one without attending to the others is unlikely to bring about sustained improvement.

Third, this research represents one of the most substantial efforts to examine the impact of collaborative school leadership on learning. The findings support the belief that collaborative leadership, as opposed to leadership from the principal alone, may offer a path towards more sustainable school improvement. We note that inclusion of a broader range of leaders in the school improvement process also provides expanded avenues for reshaping school improvement capacity, or conditions in the school that directly impact teaching and learning (Caldwell 1998; Heck and Hallinger 2010a, b; Leithwood et al. 2010; Saphier and King 1985).

In our view, these findings are both sobering and heartening. They may disappoint those who have hoped that upgrading the quality of leadership will provide an efficient and ready means of solving 'the school improvement problem'. However, we suggest that the results are also quite encouraging. They suggest that strengthening leadership capacity can pay off when it is part of a more comprehensive strategy that simultaneously targets the academic improvement capacity of the school.

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Chapter 28
Culturally Relevant Leadership for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools

Carlos R. McCray and Floyd D. Beachum

Thinking Globally and Acting Locally

For today's educational leaders, it is not enough to only consider local educational matters. This educational climate demands knowledge and recognition of global networks of mutuality that connect the world. It was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who recognized and acknowledged this concept of mutuality over 40 years ago. Dr. King had the keen understanding that our concentric circles were becoming more intertwined. In one of his speeches at Ebenezer Baptist church in 1967, Dr. King posited, "Did you ever stop to think that you can't leave for your job in the morning without being dependent on most of the world" (King, p. 254, as cited in Washington 1991). Knowledge accumulation and technological expansion have given us the ability to communicate and collaborate in new and incredible ways. This has birthed new language of global community, internationalism, and world village (to name a few) (Friedman 1999). On the other hand, this creates new problems as related to overseas expansion of jobs, global competition, and increasing automation (Pink 2006). Wagner (2008) agrees,

> In today's highly competitive global 'knowledge economy,' all students need new skills for college, careers, and citizenship. The failure to give all students these new skills leaves today's youth – and our country – at an alarming competitive disadvantage. Schools haven't changed; the world has. And our schools are not failing. Rather, they are obsolete – even the ones that score the best on standardized tests. This is a very different problem requiring an altogether different solution (p. xxi).

As it appears, the rate and pace of change have outpaced educational practice. In many cases, practice at the local level is usually defined by immediate context,

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usually void of how the immediate reality is linked to a more global reality. When the local plight is engrossing, individuals can fall into the mode of being mired in what is known as the *extreme local* (Forman 2002; Hill 2009), which is a preoccupation with exclusively local concerns. Scholarship on issues of globalization and international education are becoming more prevalent (Scholte 2000; Spring 2008; Weber 2007). Instead of the local versus global dichotomy, a more effective direction for education may very well be a glocal perspective.

A more comprehensive view may be to merge global perspectives with local concerns into what is known as *glocalization* (Robertson 1995; Rosenau 1994; Scholte 2000). Weber (2007) elaborated, "glocal development refers to the dialectic of the global and the local. It is an abstraction, useful to understand and explain social change in a general and theoretical sense, rather than in concrete, empirically specific ways that highlight the patterns and contradictoriness of human experience in contemporary times" (p. 280). Glocalization is an area of clear educational potential, especially in educational leadership where there is a dearth in the extant literature with regard to such notions (Brooks and Normore 2010). Brooks and Normore elaborated,

> The nearly complete absence of literature connecting the concept to educational leadership is troubling, and suggests that it is quite possible educational leaders are unprepared to confront the realities of leading schools in a global society. Certainly, it is possible that research and practitioner-focused works are in progress and have yet to make it to press. However, this dearth of extant inquiry may also mean that educational leaders are oblivious to the way that local and global forces interact to shape the context of the lives of those responsible for delivering quality instruction for student learning and the school and communities in which they lead. (p. 5)

Thus, it is of critical importance for researchers and practitioners in educational leadership to investigate, explore, and utilize the notion of glocalization. This notion is a way to broaden leadership perspectives practice to a level that pushes them beyond previous provincial paradigms and challenges them to incorporate global viewpoints into local decisions and actions. In this chapter, it is necessary to link the need to improve leadership and learning, especially in urban contexts. Moreover, not only should educational leaders embrace glocal perspectives, they must also balance the urgent demand for educational excellence with the continued need for educational equity.

The Challenges of Leading and Learning in Urban Areas

The United States continues to become more diverse racially/ethnically, linguistically, and religiously (Irvine 2003). Students of color represent one out of every three students enrolled in elementary and secondary public schools (National Center for Education Statistics 2000). "The United States is becoming more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse than ever, a trend that is expected to continue well into the twenty-first century" (Villegas and Lucas 2002, p. 2).

Demographic changes across the American educational landscape can present challenges for teachers and educational leaders (Obiakor 2001; Madsen and Mabokela 2005). Singleton and Linton (2006) agree, "Considering the racial composition of our student population is rapidly changing, how will educators, who are the racial inverse of the emerging student population, arrive at a new and necessary level of cultural proficiency and instructional effectiveness? Whereas the number of students of color continues to increase dramatically, the number of teachers of color is actually dropping" (p. 2). Thus, today's educators find themselves at a crossroads where they must acknowledge the changing demographic landscape and embrace new educational approaches, procedures, and methods in the face of past practice, outdated pedagogy, and institutional politics.

These broader issues are intensified in many cases when applied to the urban context. "Urban schools tend to be located in urban environments, reflective of and responsive to the greater society, bureaucratic and hierarchical by nature, and complicated by issues of class and race/ethnicity" (Obiakor and Beachum 2005, p. 10). Similarly, Noguera (2004) wrote, "In poor communities, the old, persistent problems of overcrowded classrooms, deteriorating facilities, and an insufficient supply of qualified teachers and administrators remain largely unaddressed" (p. 176). Wilson (2009) identified several factors that influenced the current structural/economic plight of many inner-city neighborhoods. Some of these factors include:

1. Federal transportation and highway policy shifted jobs from the cities to the suburbs.
2. Mortgage-interest tax exemptions and mortgages for veterans jointly facilitated the out-migration of working- and middle-class families from inner-city neighborhoods.
3. Urban renewal and the building of freeway and highway networks destroyed the pedestrian patterns and economic logic of many stable, low-income, black neighborhoods.
4. The New Federalists' fiscal policies resulted in drastic cuts in federal aid to cities whose populations had become more black and brown.
5. Weak labor market policies, which led to a sharp reduction in the real value of the minimum wage, and regressive tax policies combined to undermine the ability of poor, inner-city workers to support their families (pp. 144–145).

These are just a few examples of larger structural variables that impact urban communities and inevitably the schools within. It is within these larger structural frames that culture develops. Therefore, when the discussion of cultures within the inner-city begins, it cannot be detached from a comprehensive understanding of socio-historical and economic realities. Culture can be defined as "shared outlooks, traditions, belief systems, worldviews, preferences, manners, linguistic patterns, clothing, styles, and modes of behavior" (Wilson 2009, pp. 147–148). With this definition in mind, one can see how urban school students and parents can easily be stigmatized and labeled as apathetic, uncaring, aloof, uncouth, lazy, and/or ignorant. The indictment on them and their culture has its origins in an alternate form of cultural and social capital that is not readily available to black and brown

students (Yosso 2005). Such an indictment and judgmental perspective due to the lack of macrocultural and social capital robs them of their humanity as well as their dignity.

What we elucidate here is that if African American students and students of color have not managed to attain what is tantamount to middle-class Whites' education, dialect and lexicon (cultural capital), as well as the "right" connection and networks (social capital), they are quickly labeled as disadvantaged, dysfunctional, and/or deviant (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Obiakor 2001; Perry 2003; Yosso 2005). Unfortunately, in many instances, educators and school leaders are the ones who are implicitly as well as explicitly participating in cultural amelioration that is undergirded by bigotry and biases (Yosso 2005). In other words, educators can end up waging an ideological war against urban school students when they really should be champions of them. Thus, the battleground is the school site and the weapons are office referrals, suspensions, detentions, a low-quality curriculum, placement in special education, and/or a deficit mindset that implicitly doubts these students' potential and ability (Beachum et al. 2008; Kunjufu 2002; Lomotey 1989; Obiakor et al. 2009; Villegas and Lucas 2002). Although it is true that cultures are real, and in urban areas a certain cultural reality can develop, in order to accurately understand this culture, it must be placed in the proper context. It is worthy of our recognition as educators, or study as researchers, and our empathy as citizens. Wilson (2009) stated, "one cannot draw a simple dichotomy between culture and structure in an investigation of their relative impact, they are not mutually exclusive, in fact, they often work in concert" (p. 153). Similarly, West (1993) asserted, "We must acknowledge that structures and behaviors are inseparable, that institutions and values go hand in hand. How people act and live are shaped – though in no way dictated or determined – by the larger circumstances in which they find themselves. These circumstances can be changed, their limits attenuated, by positive actions to elevate living conditions." (p. 19)

Urban schools and communities have numerous challenges; some are external and some are internal. But all communities and schools have challenges and all students deserve a quality education. This is what links all of us together in the interest of a better nation and a better world. The aforementioned situation provides a challenge for K-12 education in general, but distinct challenges for educational leadership and teachers (i.e., leadership and learning).

The Leadership Challenge

In the twenty-first century, leadership remains an elusive concept, especially with regard to K-12 schools. "It involves influencing one or more people in a positive way so that the tasks determined by the goals and objectives of an organization are accomplished" (Alston 2002, p. 2). In addition, the expectations placed on these leaders are increasing. Complex situations and dilemmas continue to arise, causing school leaders to effectively engage multiple stakeholders. The pressure imposed

by today's educational landscape can make many feel as if they are alone. However, it is apparent that school leaders today cannot afford to act as solo decision makers and/or gatekeepers. "In a world of increasing interdependence and ceaseless technological changes, even the greatest of Great Men or Women simply can't get the job done alone. As a result, we need to rethink our most basic concept of leadership" (Heenan and Bennis 1999, p. 5). Beachum and Dentith (2004) wrote, "Models and practices of leadership that facilitate the leadership capacities of others must be developed. School leaders have to build more collaborative and democratic arrangements with teachers and others, to achieve the enormous ambitions of schooling and respond to students' diverse needs" (p. 277). This is the essence of the current leadership challenge and struggle in today's K-12 schools.

The twenty-first century will continue to be shaped by increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the United States (Cox 1994). Furthermore, schools will have to address numerous diversity-related challenges and issues (Dantley et al. 2008; Crosby 1999; Kunjufu 2002; Obiakor 2001; McCray et al. 2007; Terrell and Lindsey 2009). The response of leadership is a crucial aspect in dealing with diversity (Cox 2001; Tatum 2007). This era provides a unique opportunity for school leaders to be critically reflective, reassess outdated approaches, and policies, and reinvent schools in a way that will maximize educational excellence and equity.

Cultural Collision and Collusion

School leaders in urban districts are faced with the task of cultivating a school climate that allows for the success of all students (McCray et al. 2006) and validates them as well as their communities. Unfortunately, in many instances, there seems to be disconcerted efforts among school leaders in cultivating a school climate undergirded by principles of social justice and multiculturalism that can be parlayed into academic achievement among all students (Bogotch et al. 2008), especially students of color. What is meant here is that urban school leaders, in many instances, when it comes to academic achievement among students of color, acquiesce to focusing only on routine and "by the book" techniques (i.e., "best practices," preparation for standardized testing, discipline, school curriculum and instruction, etc.) to produce academic gains and student achievement (Price 2009). Individuals who solely capitulate to district's mandates without critiquing and interrogating the impact of the increasing amount of diversity on the educative process are in essence *apparatchiks* posing as school leaders. Such acquiescence to ill-advised policies and procedures by school leaders in the attempt to increase standardized literacy and numeracy is problematic on many levels. It implicitly promotes transactional management by school leaders when it comes to the teaching and learning process instead of progressive transformational leadership – leadership designed to critique, interrogate, and unearth potential inequities within the school climate and culture that prohibits learning among all students. In some instances,

progressive urban school leaders will accede to the constructs of multiculturalism when it comes to teaching and learning. This concession is done by emphasizing and advocating for adequate content integration that prompts teachers to use materials from different cultures and groups to make a lesson a more meaningful experience (Banks 1995). Such a progressive posture among urban school leaders also gives teachers the confidence and inspiration to utilize equity pedagogy as well as a knowledge construction process within their classrooms (Banks 1995). Respectively, such approaches allow the educator to use different teaching methods and styles to reach students as well as provide counter-narratives to the purported "truthful" narratives that have historically been presented. In essence, the urban instructional leader encourages his or her faculty to not succumb to the antiquated and outdated correspondence theory, which gives credence to the notion that students are there for the sole purpose to receive the great wisdom of the educator (Bowles and Gintis 1976). When educators and school leaders give in to systems and structures that are likely to promote the correspondence theory, it increases the chances of a cultural collision taking place within schools (Beachum and McCray 2004). Cultural collision occurs when students, especially students of color from low wealth communities, bring with them a culture from their homes and communities that is not congruent with the culture of their school. In most instances, the culture of these students is looked upon from a deficit perspective (Lightfoot 2009; McKenzie 2001; Rodriguez 2004; Valencia and Solorzano 1997; Yosso 2005) – a sense that the students' culture is of little or no value or worth. Thus, educators and school leaders feel the sense of urgency to provide amelioration to students and their *acrimonious attitude and culture* (Carter et al. 1994).

This urgent need to correct students and their culture is problematic on many levels. First, it oxymoronically reduces any sense of authentic caring or an ethic of care from the students' perspective (McCray and Beachum 2006; Starratt 1991). The skill set and understanding that educators and school leaders need to provide appropriate feedback and correction when it comes to potential behavior of students of color is too often inadequate and negligent and many times hinders learning from taking place (Ferguson 2001). Once again, this inadequacy and negligence plays out in the construct of educators and school leaders perceiving the child as the defect (Milner 2006; Obiakor et al. 2005; Villegas and Lucas 2002). But Carter et al. (1994) opined that "Instead of operating from the perception that the students themselves are deficient…educators should scrutinize the instruction and curricula in order to assess and correct inadequacies there" (p. 462). In many instances, such attitudes and disposition among school leaders and educators are operationalized vis-à-vis inadequate disciplinary procedures where students of color are ushered out of the classroom and many instances out of the educational process all together (Antrop-Gonzalez and Valez 2005; McCray and Beachum 2006). What we purport here is that in order for effective instruction to take place within the classroom, especially with students of color, the notions of cultural collision and cultural collusion (Beachum and McCray 2011) that are taking place in schools across the United States as well as in schools in other countries have to be properly understood from a capital context (Yosso 2005).

As was previously mentioned, cultural collision is the notion that students of color from low wealth communities due to their lack of cultural and social capital (Bartee and Brown 2007; Yosso 2005) are inherently at odds with the culture of the school which produces a clash between educators and school leaders and students who are perceived to be at a "deficit." As a result of such a collision of cultures, unfortunately, many students develop a defeatist outlook reflected by behavior undergirded by a posteriori conceptualization – which we identify as cultural collusion (Beachum and McCray 2008). The notion that many students of color from impoverished backgrounds lack the cultural and social capital needed to succeed in school has been implicitly and in some instances explicitly communicated (Feagin and Feagin 1978; Yosso 2005). Unfortunately, it has in essence, created a deep fissure among school officials and the students themselves making learning and academic achievement a tumultuous task (Bartee and Brown 2007). "Cultural collusion describes the negative cultural/societal implications that emerge when complex cultural cues and messages seem to influence individual and group behavior" (Beachum and McCray 2008, p.104). As applied to schools, if a student has a lackadaisical attitude toward school and the teacher (or administrator) does nothing to motivate, encourage, or reach out to such a student, they collude in an implicit agreement that ultimately hurts the student.

The aforementioned collision and collusion of students of color in the educative process ultimately shape their expectations. The expectancy theory indicates that individuals within an organization are more apt to perform at higher levels of productivity when there is a clear alignment with what is expected of them and their skills. Thus, individuals within an organization are more apt to perform if they believe that they are capable of meeting such expectations and there is remuneration of some form at the end of such efforts (Hersey et al. 1996). The notion of cultural collision is not unlike the expectancy theory that undergirds motivation. Stipek (2001) has elaborated on the tangible connection of students' motivation and their self-efficacy. Unfortunately, this research with regard to increasing student motivation has mostly been explicitly geared toward the alignment of students' ability and learning style with the work that is expected of them within the classroom.

Thus, this is typically undergirded by pedagogical techniques that teachers can deploy within the classroom to motivate students to perform (i.e., Constructivism, Understanding by Design, Content Integration, Integrating the Curriculum, etc.). We do not mean to suggest that these endeavors are wasted efforts and do not have any merit in students' self efficacy with regard to learning. Such ventures are very much worthy attempts in the teaching and learning process to increase student achievement. An argument could be made that due to the increase reform measures that schools are inundated with on a yearly basis, such pedagogical efforts prove more challenging for educators and school leaders. Nevertheless, school leaders should be cautioned with regard to focusing solely on pedagogical alignment of students' ability, interests, and learning styles as opposed to focusing on the climate and culture of the school which can be a contributing factor to the increased number of students dropping out of school. The former efforts allow those students who are

on a continuum of highly motivated to somewhat motivated to continue to achieve. However, it is the latter attempt that allows those students on the margins of and peripheral to becoming part of the dropout and criminal statistics to stay in school and also strive for a better educational outcome.

School Climate and Culture

The responsibility for ensuring that the school climate and culture are conducive for cultivating graduates instead of dropouts is one that rests with the school leaders (Fullan 2004; McCray et al. 2006; McCray et al. 2004). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) described the operationlization of the school culture and climate as the process through which schools operate and function on a daily basis and the way in which all participants within the organization communicate and relate to one another. Thus, long before effective instruction takes place in the classroom it is a necessity for students to be available and on the receiving end of such instruction. To us, this is paramount with regard to teaching and learning. Unfortunately, too many educators and school leaders either consciously or unconsciously are ushering students of color out of the classroom or out of the educational process entirely (Ferguson 2001). This jettisoning of many students of color (Ferguson 2001; McCray and Beachum 2006) is undergirded by the aforementioned cultural collision and collusion of school leaders and educators on black and brown students as well as students from low wealth communities. In many urban areas, the dropout rate for students of color is increasing exponentially, especially for African American males. In numerous urban schools, the dropout rate among Black males is approaching 50% (Cosby and Poussaint 2007). Thus, the high dropout rate is exacerbating Black males' unemployment rate. African American males are twice as likely to be unemployed as their white and Asian counterparts, and unfortunately such a high unemployment rate is having severe consequences on African American males revolving through the criminal justice system (Cosby and Poussaint 2007; Wilson 2009). In addition, long before students of color decide to drop out of school; in many instances they have the unfortunate opportunity of being misidentified, mislabeled, misassessed, and mistracked (Obiakor and Ford 2002). According to Jackson (2008), young Black males consist of 9% of the student population; however they consist of 20% of the number of students enrolled in special education classes that offer services to low achievers and *mentally impaired*. The corollary is that they only represent 4% of students in the *gifted and talented programs* (Thomas and Stevenson 2009). Such statistics are alarming and call into question the notion of cogent teaching and learning when there seems to be an anemic effort in ensuring all students regardless of the amount of social and cultural capital they bring with them to the schoolhouse gates, are given the best chance to achieve (Bartee and Brown 2007).

In order for there to be a dramatic decrease in the number of students who are being ushered out of the classroom and the educational process, educational leaders,

as well as educators, must interrogate and unearth edicts that might situate students of color in a position of choosing a false dichotomy of academic success or academic failure. Life altering choices by students exhibiting limited amounts of cultural and social capital to educators and school leaders should not be disregarded as beyond the purview of school officials (Yosso 2005). To the contrary, educators at varying levels have had a long and substantive role in the decisions that students are making with regard to their success in life (Dantley 2009; Ferguson 2001; Foster 2009). In addressing the issue of cultural and social capital and its role in the collision and collusion of the educative process of students of color, school leaders should be cognizant of the fact that in many instances they may have biases toward those very pedagogies that are designed to enhance achievement for student of color. For example, McCray et al. (2004) intimated that some school leaders have a negative perception of those pedagogies. In their in-depth investigation of school principals in a southeastern state, it was found that school principals in smaller schools and more rural areas were more inclined to support the idea that curricula such as multicultural education is divisive among the student population and takes away from concentration on literacy and numeracy. This supposition among school leaders in this study can be extremely problematic and increase the chances of collision and collusion occurring among educators and students of color. It is curricula such as multicultural education that can change the total school environment and allows all students to achieve regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, and/or socioeconomic status (McCray et al. 2004). Thus, school leaders can ill afford to arrive at faulty conclusions on the value of a multicultural education curricula and its role in the educative process, especially when so many students of color and from low wealth communities find themselves vulnerable to dropping out or getting misplaced into special education.

Also, McCray et al. (2006) found with this same demographic population that when it comes to school principals' perceptions of the impact of multicultural education curricula on the school's climate, the socioeconomic status of the community has a role in principals' perceptions. According to McCray, Alston, and Beachum:

> School principals have a role in creating a school climate that allows the heterogeneity found within our schools and society to be an advantage and a not a disadvantage. School principals can create a school climate aligned with the values and principles of multicultural education by promoting a school culture that reduces biases and prejudices….One way to ensure that biases and prejudices are removed from the culture of the school is to challenge the cycle of socialization (Harro 2000) where certain people, who are favored over others, receive benefits in America as a result of their position in society. (p. 14)

These authors found that school principals from low wealth communities were more inclined to believe that multicultural education had little impact on their school's climate than the principals from middle to high wealth communities. These studies by McCray et al. (2004, 2006) are crucial because they identify school administrators who are inclined to believe that multicultural education does little to enhance the quality of education of students of color or the climate of the school. Also, as McCray et al. (2004) have shown, in many instances, school leaders still view multicultural education curricula has a negative value.

McCray et al. (2004, 2006) illuminate the impetus for the collision and collusion that occurs in schools not only in the designated southeastern state where their study took place but also in schools across the United States. If school leaders accede to the notion that pedagogies undergirded by multicultural education are not warranted in their schools, the chances cultural collision and collusion between school officials and students of color may increase. This collision or conflict is undergirded by the premise that students of color from low wealth communities (or urban areas) with little cultural and social capital are part of the educative process as a result of pseudo conscription (i.e., compulsory education) are malleable and ripe for amelioration. This supposition is what leads to the aforementioned antediluvian correspondence theory, where schools expect students to disregard their community stimuli and capitulate to the antiquated pedagogical strategies of teachers (Yosso 2005). Alas, when students do not leave their culture or identities at the gates of the school house, the ones with the most capital (i.e., teachers and school officials) tend to apply in an oxymoronic manner a hegemonic pedagogy designed to gain compliance – germane to the edicts of a police state. Such activities by teachers and school officials seem oxymoronic because there is a caring deficiency involved in the structure of the school climate as well as the delivery of instruction. According to Professor Marc Hill of Teachers College, Columbia University,

> Progressive curriculum and pedagogy are being supplanted by the "teach to the test" strategies that are implicitly demanded by *No Child Left Behind* and other technocratic policy initiatives. Despite growing levels of surveillance and militarism, our schools are increasingly vulnerable to crime and violence (Beachum and McCray 2011, p. 3).

This quote by Dr. Hill summarizes the problems that arise when schools succumb to plutocratic demands and mandates – those rigid and inflexible edicts that come from the top of the power structure, without investing considerable time and effort into the whole child or the notion of community awareness. According to Randolph (2009), proper leadership with regard to educating students of color has to be provided not only in the confines of the schoolhouse but outside of the schoolhouse as well. This means that school leaders educating students of color have an obligation to situate their leadership in the context of active community engagement undergirded by an ethic of care. Therefore, school leadership that is only "confined to the schoolhouse" is misdirected leadership at its best and a leadership negligent of caring at its worst.

In order to best deal with cultural collision and collusion and encourage a more multicultural workplace (Cox 2001) we offer a framework called Culturally Relevant Leadership.

Elements of Culturally Relevant Leadership

The following are promising practices for the school leader who embraces a more culturally relevant leadership style for the purpose of a better educational environment. First, educational leaders should encourage and support diverse teaching methods.

Teachers should be allowed to explore diverse styles of teaching and learning. School leaders should play more of a supportive role in instructional leadership and not just evaluative. In this kind of environment, teachers are allowed to investigate, inquire, experiment, reflect, revise, relearn, and change, with the approval of administration. Concurrently, teachers are to also be held accountable because the ultimate goal is student success.

Second, school leaders should build leadership capacity and value multiple voices. Culturally relevant leaders should look for opportunities to build leadership capacity and teacher leadership. More specifically, this means identifying and encouraging others to take on more responsibilities. At the same time, school leaders should value the voices of all in the organization. "The administration and faculty together set the standards that the teachers work to achieve. Through their collaboration, they experience the freedom, ownership, and accountability they need to accomplish the job." (Singleton and Linton 2006, p. 227) This requires the leader to even make space for dissent (not disrespect).

Skeptics (not cynics) can be a valuable part of the school community by bringing up things that may have been overlooked (Fullan 2004).

Finally, school leaders should work to connect the school with the community. Schools are often connected to the communities in which they reside. Ergo, educational leaders must make effective efforts to involve the external community in the life of the school. "Schools can never divorce themselves from the communities where they exist" (Swaminathan 2005, p. 195). Educational leaders should create opportunities for dialogue, invite speakers, host events, and build coalitions with the external community. According to Singleton and Linton (2006), "the administration leads the effort to reach out to all parents and members of the community." They elaborate stating, "Parents and other community members do not feel disfranchised nor do they feel intimidated due to their own personal educational attainment, English language skills, racial description, economic status, dress, or perceptions of school derived from their own personal experiences. Families know that their voice matters in school affairs" (p. 227).

Taken together, these suggestions help to create an educational context were student success can flourish.

Conclusion

Ultimately Culturally Relevant Leadership is a way to foster student success. Student success as defined here involves students making good grades, doing well on standardized tests, staying enrolled in school, feeling respected and appreciated in school, and realizing their true potential in the world as well as recognizing their own limitless potential. In this framework, the school leader starts with the "self" in freeing their minds and escaping the snares of the status quo. Leaders must then confront negative images and stereotypes resulting in a change in attitude. Finally, as reflective practitioners, they must change the way they operate on a daily basis.

In a world of rapid technological change and complex urban contexts, new leadership approaches must eclipse the paralysis of past paradigms. Especially in diverse urban contexts, school leaders must recognize the impact of cultural collision and address the issue of cultural collusion. Culturally relevant leadership is a way to do both.

Culturally Relevant Leadership is a promising concept for closing the gap between educational rhetoric and reality. It ultimately encourages educational excellence combined with equity. It has the ability to bring out the very best in our leadership for today's schools (especially in urban schools). One educator once stated, "Culturally relevant leaders help people (students and teachers) who don't know, realize that they don't know and move them to growth" (R. A., personal communication, April 25, 2008).

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Chapter 29
Expanding Learning-Focused Leadership in US Urban Schools*

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Leadership and the Challenges to Supporting Learning in Urban Schools

The challenge of ensuring that every student has an opportunity to succeed is a mandate that rests with all schools in the urban centers of the United States, indeed all US schools, irrespective of the district context. All educators feel this mandate intensely, especially school leaders, who are increasingly held to account for the presence of powerful, equitable teaching and learning, and ultimately for student success. The work of ensuring high-quality teaching and learning is thus a leadership challenge.

The words of a new third grade teacher in October of 2007 at an elementary school in the South Bronx of New York City, 2 months into her first year of teaching, hint at what it might mean to meet this challenge. She was responding to a question about what she saw as the priorities for her work:

> Okay, the priorities for learning. I believe that, well, first of all, in terms of subject, I believe reading, writing, and math are the utmost importance for the school. I believe that [the leadership team] speaks about differentiating our instruction to reach all kinds of learners, no matter what level they are at and no matter how they learn, what modality they learn by. We really want to collect data, make sure that everything is assessment-based so that we can see where they stand and what progress, if any, they are making. That is pretty much what I have been told by the school, which I think is exactly what we need to do.

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Several things about this teacher's response are striking. She speaks confidently, yet she has been on the job long enough to have her confidence shaken. She has a clear sense of what is expected of her, as well as what aspects of the curriculum are to be given the greatest weight. She talks about these as priorities for the whole school. These expectations have been communicated to her explicitly by the school's leadership team and by her district – here, she is referring to more than the principal – and she has bought into these priorities. What is more, at this early, vulnerable time in her development as a teacher, she has internalized the idea that children have different needs, and can best be approached in a differentiated way that tailors their learning environment to their needs, ways of learning, cultural backgrounds, and prior learning experiences. And in her efforts to successfully reach each child, she sees data as an essential tool. Armed with it, she is approaching her new professional work as a set of activities informed by a clear and continuous picture of what students are learning, and where they can be helped to improve their learning. And she is being taught how to operationalize these ideas in her daily practice.

The teacher's response speaks volumes about the role and potential power of school leadership focused on improving learning for all students, within a policy context that demands a concerted effort to meet the mandate noted above. Her words are spoken in the kind of setting known for uneven support for, and high turnover of, novice teachers, often coupled with pervasive demoralization among veteran staff (Payne 2008). She works in a setting for which few young teachers are adequately prepared, that often fails to convert their energy into effective teaching. It is noteworthy that a school-based leadership team has already given her a clear image of how to approach her work.

The teacher's response raises important questions for urban educators, school systems, and policymakers. What kinds of leadership practices within the school, exercised by whom, have helped this new teacher develop a clear, confident picture of the classroom work she is tackling? What helps these leaders develop the know-how and the working relationships to address this teacher's needs effectively? How do the direction, guidance, and support she receives from the leadership team reflect actions and conditions in the larger district, state, and federal environment in which she teaches? What does she bring to her teaching and her new professional learning in this school, and how does the school recognize and work with her strengths and weaknesses to help her become a capable teacher?

The US schools in which teachers like this one work, and the systems of which they are a part, are complex and continually changing to ensure that the goals of education are achieved. Much of this change, particularly in public expectations, has been in response to the historic difficulty that schools have faced in providing powerful and equitable opportunities to learn for all students. Public schools in the US have many successes to point to in the modern era (Berliner and Biddle 1996) and have served to educate a broader swath of the nation's student population over the decades. However, if the schools are to meet the challenges of this century and

truly level the playing field for all students, then further changes, adaptations, and courageous action are required (Loveless 2009).

Of all the school-based factors that can influence learning for students in schools, an array of leadership actions that have been clearly linked to improvement in student learning (Leithwood et al. 2004) is second only to teachers and teaching. This chapter examines this critical activity by presenting what has been learned from a national study of urban school leaders' work in the US. As part of a larger research project investigating leadership and learning improvement,[1] this study sets out to look carefully at a small number of urban schools in contrasting districts that are finding ways to support progress among a diverse student clientele, share the leadership work among various staff members, and align resources with a shared agenda for improving learning across the school. Our goal was to discover lessons and potential directions for schools and for those who support the work of school-based educators concerning the ways that leadership can be focused on the learning of students, school staff, and the school community as a whole (Knapp et al. 2003; Copland and Knapp 2006).

We offer an account of what we learned from this study, first, by framing our approach to leadership and to the investigation, followed by a conceptualization of the demanding environments in which urban school leaders work. Following that, we review findings concerning the work of supervisory leaders who took learning improvement as a central and serious goal. Next we consider the work of their nonsupervisory counterparts in school-based leadership for learning improvement. We conclude with observations about what both supervisory and nonsupervisory staff have to learn to engage this new work, and what pathways are available for that learning.

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[1] With support from The Wallace Foundation, a team of researchers from the Center for the Study of Teaching & Policy at the University of Washington undertook an investigation of leadership in US urban schools and districts that are seeking to improve both learning and leadership. The study explored the following overarching question: *What does it take for leaders to promote and support powerful, equitable learning in a school and in the district and state system that serves the school?* The study pursued this question through a set of coordinated investigations, each with an intensive qualitative or mixed methods strategy and with overlapping samples, designed to yield images of possibility in selected districts and schools. Study sites were chosen to reflect a focus on learning and leadership improvement, and varying degrees of progress towards improvement goals; (1) the *school leadership investigation*, reported here, which examined the reconfiguration and exercise of leadership within elementary, middle and high schools to enable more focused support for learning improvement; (2) the *resource investment investigation*, which examined how staffing and other resources were (re)allocated at multiple levels of the system, in alignment with learning improvement goals, to enhance equity and leadership capacity (see Plecki et al. 2009); and (3) the *central office transformation investigation*, which explored how districts were reinventing central office work practices and relationships with the schools, to better support district-wide improvement of teaching and learning (see Honig et al. 2010). A synthesis report integrates themes and findings from all three studies (see Knapp et al. 2010).

How We Approached and Studied Urban School Leadership

We approach our examination of urban school leadership from a particular vantage point we have referred to as *learning-focused leadership*[2] This set of ideas treats school and district leadership as concerned with promoting "powerful, equitable learning" simultaneously for students, professionals, and the system as a whole (Knapp et al. 2003; Copland and Knapp 2006). This framework further assumes that these three arenas of learning are interdependent, and that one cannot be maximized without the other two. In focusing effort on these learning targets, district and school leaders establish a persistent public focus on learning, build professional communities that concern themselves with learning improvement, engage external environments that matter for learning, mobilize effort along strategically identified pathways of activity, and create coherence across learning improvement efforts. As they focus attention and mobilize effort, learning-focused leaders at the school level are centrally concerned with the learning of students, the teaching staff, and themselves, if not their school as a *learning organization*.

As part of the school leaders' focus on learning, we pay special attention to school-based *instructional leadership*, i.e., the shared work and commitments involved in directing, guiding, and supporting teaching practice and efforts to improve it. In educational leadership literature in the past decades, instructional leadership has been traditionally conceived in ways that are largely principal-centric (or more recently focused on individual instructional coaches), sometimes narrowly focusing on what amounts to "instructional coaching" or "clinical supervision" of individual teachers, and sometimes including a wider range of functions that promote instructional improvement across the school (Leithwood and Duke 1999; Gordon 1992; Rossow 1990; Sergiovanni 1987; Taylor 2008). We expand this notion to treat instructional leadership as *inherently distributed* among different staff in the building (Spillane 2006) who bring attention to the shared – or contested – learning improvement agenda(s) of the school and district. Here, we approach the distribution of leadership as a fact of school life, not an administrative action (like the delegation or distribution of responsibilities), though administrators and others are able to shape the way participants engage in distributed instructional leadership.

Literature has long underscored the complex nature of instructional leadership in schools and the difficulty that single individuals such as principals or coaches have in fulfilling such expectations (Murphy 1992): the work of instructional leadership has become more complex and too much for a single individual, both in terms of energy and expertise. Accordingly, recent work on the principalship (Portin et al. 2003) points to the principal as leader of an instructional leadership cadre, rather than as a sole, multipurpose, all-responsible instructional leader.

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[2] These ideas build on others' work using similar terms, for example, the "learning-centered principal" (DuFour 2002) and "leadership for learning" (Resnick and Glennan 2002; Stoll et al. 2003).

Other recent work has added the dimension of leading instructional improvement so that it acknowledges and supports the considerable demands of external accountability systems, at the same time that it prompts internal accountability for instructional improvement (Halverson et al. 2007).

While leadership has historically been associated with courageous action and compelling characters, that heroic image of leadership is not the model that guides this research. Instead, we view educational leadership as the responsible exercise of influence by multiple actors, who impart purpose to the school and mobilize effort toward fulfilling that purpose. Leadership inevitably implicates a range of activities, roles, commitments, and material and social resources, and it is best understood as collective work. If there is heroism in this work, it lies less in the actions of charismatic individuals (e.g., a "turnaround principal"), and more in the sustained engagement of multiple people around a shared learning improvement agenda.

Given this conception of leadership, it made sense to employ a research strategy that allowed us to examine leadership work in some detail over time. Accordingly, we pursued a multiple-case investigation of selected schools within four school districts: Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta, GA; New York City/Empowerment Schools Organization[3]; Springfield Public Schools, Springfield, MA; and Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, Norwalk, CA. These district settings were chosen to represent a range of different kinds of US urban settings (varying by size, region, reform theory, reform history, resource availability), yet all had focused considerable effort on the improvement of teaching, learning, and leadership, and had benefited from unusually stable leadership at the district level. In addition, all served student populations with a high degree of poverty and racial and linguistic diversities.[4]

Within these districts, we selected 15 schools, in which we pursued case study research across a year and half (through the 2007–2008 school year, and first semester of the 2008–2009 year). The schools were selected to display three qualities: (1) students in the school were making progress (however, the school or district defined that); (2) the leadership work of the school was consciously shared; and (3) the school had made an attempt to align its resources with its learning improvement agenda. The resulting sample of schools that met these criteria varied considerably

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[3] Under the organization of the New York City Department of Education at the time of the study, all schools in the city chose to be part of one of 14 School Support Organizations (SSOs), the segment of the district central office that offered the most direct front-line support to the school. We concentrated our research on the largest of these SSOs, called the Empowerment Schools Organization (ESO), which subsumed approximately 500 schools, or nearly one-third of the city's schools. The great majority of our data collection came from schools within the ESO, and to a lesser extent, units in the central office with which they worked, though some background data came from other sources outside this SSO. In this sense, we never set out to study the whole of the New York City Department of Education reform, and NYC/ESO comprised the relevant "district" for most of our analyses.

[4] All but one of the study districts had an established relationship with The Wallace Foundation, as part of an effort to improve leadership development.

in how high or low performing they were in absolute terms, though all were making progress. Thus, we were not attempting to capture typical schools or those that exemplify patterns of staff demoralization, and chronic low performance that have been often detailed in research on US urban education (e.g., Payne 2008). That said, the schools we studied worked with a similar clientele and under conditions that are widespread among urban schools serving an impoverished student population.

Our research was largely qualitative, carried out through four cycles of field data collection across a year and a half. During each cycle, two or sometimes one field-worker spent 2–3 days at the school, interviewing key informants (individuals in formal and informal leadership roles), a sample of classroom teachers, and others (e.g., parent coordinators) who were central to the unfolding learning improvement agenda of the school. We also observed leadership events and other improvement activities (e.g., professional development, coaching, collaborative planning, design team meetings, etc.) whenever these coincided with our visits. Additionally, we assembled detailed documentary files on each school, drawing together newsletters, school improvement plans, pacing guides, budgets, staffing rosters, and other archival material that helped to illuminate the leadership work of the school.[5]

Leadership for Learning Improvement in Demanding Environments

The work of leading learning improvement in urban schools cannot be understood without close attention to the larger environment with which these schools interact on a daily basis. In brief, urban districts – combining central office and school board actions with neighborhood and community conditions, and reflecting local interpretations of federal and state policy – present school leaders with demanding environments. District reform literature highlights various reform initiatives in the district environment that converge on schools (e.g., Togneri and Anderson 2003; Cawelti and Protheroe 2001; Massell and Goertz 2002; Hill and Celio 1999; Knapp et al. 1998). Together and separately, these aspects of the district environment provide *direction* (in essence, actions that tell school leaders what to do), *guidance* (advice that offers direction, but does not require it), and *support* (available assistance for pursuing what school leaders take as their priorities); together, these environmental influences enable or inhibit school leaders' efforts to improve teaching and learning. These environmental influences may or may not be consistent or coherent, and they confront school leaders with complexity. As often as not, they create a puzzle for school leaders: what to pay attention to, how to interpret reform messages and resolve contradictions, and how to pursue relationships with the central office or other external entities.

At least four interrelated aspects of the reform environment in urban districts have direct and potentially powerful implications for school-level efforts at learning

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[5] For more detail on the methods used in this study, see Portin et al. (2009).

improvement, and figure prominently in many, if not most, of the published cases of US district reform across the past three decades.

- *The system of instructional guidance and support.* Generally rooted in state learning standards, district central offices may offer (or require) schools to follow a curriculum scope-and-sequence, use district-adopted textbooks, teach to benchmarks, or follow pacing guides, among other common instructional support tools. The district also provides a variety of professional development opportunities offered either in house or by other groups like university preparation programs and external resource organizations, once again, closely or distantly connected to learning standards and the assessment and accountability system.
- *The assessment and accountability system.* To measure state learning standards, government-sanctioned accountability systems establish assessment measures and attach consequences to the results (e.g., for teachers, administrators, schools, and students). The assessment system may be limited to a single annual test, or entail a series of assessment tools to be used in varying ways across the school year.
- *The district's investment in data-based practice.* Assisted by other groups (e.g., vendors, external resource organizations), the district may try to create an infrastructure for data use with one or more technologically based systems (data warehouses, computer-based tools for querying data) and offer technical assistance to data users. Inevitably, whatever system and assistance are offered will include the data implied by accountability requirements, but may not be limited to these data. The district may accompany these efforts with messages that promote or require specific forms of data use (e.g., for school improvement planning) and also various efforts to enhance data literacy among a range of potential users.
- *Noninstructional or operational requirements and supports.* School administrators must manage many aspects of school operations (e.g., transportation, facility maintenance, compliance reporting or personnel management) that are not overtly or directly concerned with instruction, though their indirect effects can generally be felt in classrooms. These operational demands – and the means that districts create to streamline and facilitate operational management – have serious repercussions for school leaders' ability to engage in learning-focused leadership.

As Fig. 29.1 implies, these features of the policy landscape are interconnected in various ways, and together they form an inescapable, district-wide "learning improvement agenda," that shapes leadership in the school.

The figure also underscores that the district central office and school board are not the sole contextual influences on what happens in schools. State and federal contexts shape the exercise of leadership and the learning improvement work of the school. Communities also matter to leadership work, directly or indirectly – for example, through the support and participation of business partners, religious foundations, philanthropy; the all-important investment of the families and neighbors of the schools; and the reverberations of municipal politics.

One final feature of the district environment gives potentially different meanings to the elements just described, and may fundamentally alter their form. District leaders, with the support of school boards and school governance policy, may allocate
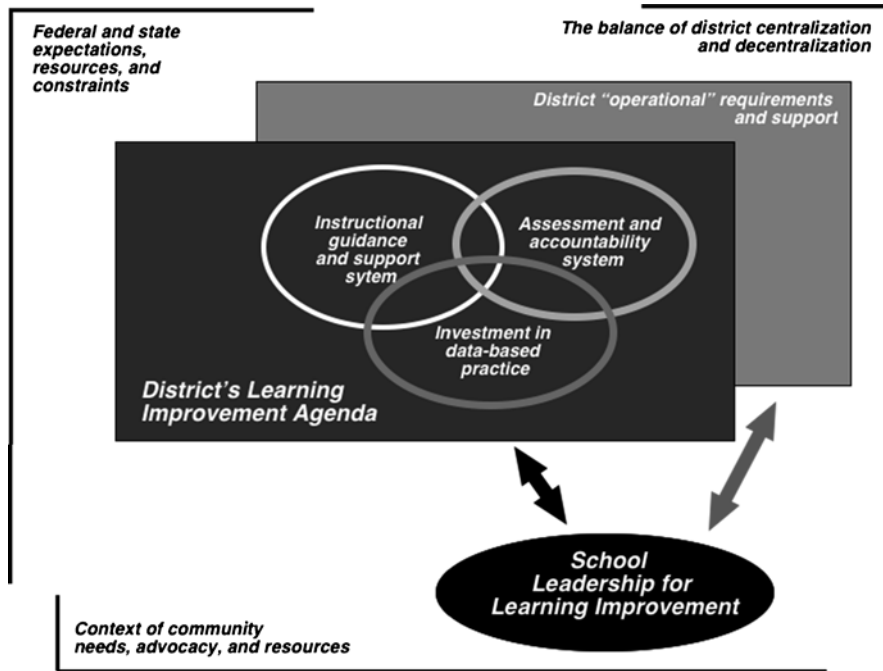
Fig. 29.1 The demanding environment for urban school leadership

different degrees of autonomy and discretion to decision makers at each level of the system. By specifying the range of matters over which school leaders have some (or complete) discretion and by offering greater or lesser resources to take action on these matters, the system may emphasize centralization of control, decentralization, or some combination (see Honig 2009). A somewhat centralized stance towards leadership and reform in large urban districts has been a norm in recent years in the US, apparent in many accounts of apparently promising district reform (e.g., Snipes et al. 2002; Walsh 2006; Hightower et al. 2002), especially under "managed instruction" arrangements. Alternatively, experiments in large urban districts with more decentralized arrangements – or more accurately, arrangements that combine the devolution of control to the schools in exchange for commitment to meeting stringent, externally defined accountability standards – have also captured a lot of attention (e.g., Bryk et al. 1998; Ouchi 2006; Fruchter 2008).

Principals and New Forms of Learning-Focused Leadership

The work of principals and other supervisory leaders in leading a learning improvement agenda has both historic roots and emerging characteristics. Principals have long been charged with managing a safe and well-run facility while simultaneously
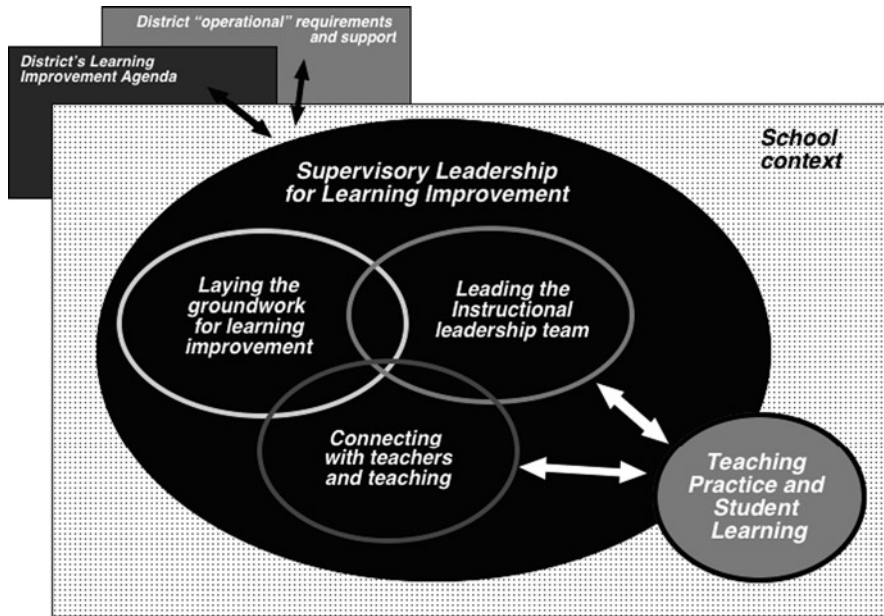
Fig. 29.2 Supervisory leadership in pursuit of the school's learning improvement agenda

being the chief instructional leader of the school. And they have always been responsible for attending to district and state directives, and communicating with outside audiences on behalf the school.

The supervisory leaders we studied were doing far more than managing a school building and responding to, or engaging, the larger environment. They were guiding and participating in a process of creating the school's own learning improvement agenda, and then doing what they could, along with their colleagues, to realize that agenda. As they did so, the principals and other supervisory leaders were simultaneously engaged in three interrelated spheres of activity that, together, embodied the exercise of learning-focused leadership in their schools. These interrelated leadership actions are portrayed in Fig. 29.2.

First, they were laying the groundwork for learning improvement in the school and for their leadership work to pursue this goal, through goal setting, culture building, data use, and other means. Second, they were connecting with teachers and classrooms directly and continuously in a variety of ways, by shifting the pattern of the annual evaluation cycle to one of largely ongoing and informal interactions with teachers. But third, and more important perhaps, they were forging and leading an instructional leadership team rather than a collection of individuals, and finding a voice as principal in this collective work. Together, the net effect of all three of these areas of activity was a healthy distribution of instructional leadership across the school.

Laying the Groundwork for Learning Improvement

In response to district expectations and their own visions of what their schools needed, principals and other supervisory leaders typically approached their work with a vision of themselves as leaders of a school-wide and school-specific learning improvement agenda. This agenda involved many people and a range of activities that activated the school – and, in particular, the teacher leaders – in pursuit of learning improvement priorities. Here, the supervisory leaders' work, especially that of the principal, features (1) assembling and developing a high-quality teaching staff; (2) establishing and legitimizing school-wide learning priorities; (3) developing trust and a team-oriented culture among staff about learning improvement; and (4) using data to focus and anchor improvement work (Copland 2003; Drago-Severson 2007). In short, these leaders found ways to articulate and communicate compelling priorities for improvement work that all members of the school community could grasp and accept.

A key piece of the groundwork for learning-focused leadership in the schools we studied was to get data of all kinds to be a regular and assumed part of discourse in the school. As natural "point people" for school-level data use (e.g., as noted by Supovitz and Klein 2003; Wayman et al. 2009), supervisory leaders used data in two ways: first, as a means of understanding what was happening in classrooms and across the school, as a basis for decisions about instructional improvement activities; and second, as a tool to assist teachers (and instructional leaders) in their own teaching (or leadership) practice.

Given the district's press for data-based practice and (in most instances) the school leaders' use of data to anchor improvement work, assessment data was a constant topic of conversation in schools, as recent work on instructional leadership is increasingly documenting (Halverson et al. 2007). Most school leaders seemed confident that the assessment tools they were using – which typically were provided by the district or state – would help increase student performance. They also seemed confident that if the tools they had now were not the right ones, they would either find or develop something better. In no schools did we find a disregard for data. At worst, we heard school leaders lamenting the limited supply of data or the limited amount of time to work with the data they had. A principal in Norwalk-La Mirada commented on her staff's growing engagement with data as follows:

> I have modeled the value of having test data, and also in demonstrating for the teachers and modeling how we're keeping track of our attendance, our suspension, even if it is not achievement data, having that. I have been very pleased with it. … I believe that there are teachers in grade levels that are using and talking about pre and post [assessment] more on their own initiative than I thought they would. When I spoke to them in December about their benchmark assessments and I met with each of them for about 45 minutes, I was surprised to see what assessments they were using. They will not call it pre and post, but they're calling it assessment. I can tell you that out of 36 teachers, 30 are doing pre and post assessment using the benchmarks.

School leaders and other school staff were also using data to ask and answer questions about problems of practice in the school. In one high school, the leadership

team members were trying to understand the dropout rate in their school, prompted by a federal expectation that had changed the definition of dropout to any student who did not graduate in 4 years of starting as a freshman, a change which appeared to increase the dropout rate substantially. Using data to inquire into the school's "new" dropouts, the leadership team was able to pinpoint particular groups whose early performance in the school (attaining one or more Fs as freshmen) increased their risk of dropping out. This analysis led to a targeted intervention to discontinue the use of F grades in ninth grade, coupled with activities to ensure that no ninth grader entered 10th grade credit deficient.

Connecting With Teachers and Classrooms Beyond the Annual Evaluation Cycle

As one would expect, principals and assistant principals participated in formal, summative processes (as directed by their respective districts), but they were also using various, more formative practices to give substantive feedback to teachers and retain a connection with what was happening in classrooms. These practices included informal classroom observations, targeted "learning walks," and leading and participating in professional development during grade-level and content area meetings, whole staff meetings, or in classrooms with teachers. The net effect was to significantly expand the meaning of "supervision," from an annual accounting of teaching performance to ongoing conversation aimed at improving performance.

Outside any formal evaluation process, principals and other supervisory leaders observed in classrooms on a regular basis, often through informal classroom observations, which occurred somewhat spontaneously and lasted a few minutes, though sometimes these occasions were more structured. One assistant principal in Atlanta offered an example of the former:

> If I'm only in the classroom for 5 minutes – that's observation by walking around. It doesn't have to be 20 minutes or 30 minutes. You can go in and just scan the room and see what you need to see or what you're looking for….I try to organize it such that I'm touching on a little bit of everything daily.

Leading Instructional Leadership Teams

Whatever their skills at and propensity for working directly with teachers, in and out of the classroom, the principals and other supervisory leaders understood the limits of their own capacity to serve the instructional improvement needs of the entire school, as established by research on the principalship (Portin et al. 2003). The continual demands on the principal's time, not to mention limitations on the principal's base of instructional expertise and often the size and complexity of

the school, prohibited the principal from providing direct instructional support to all teachers who needed it. Furthermore, the sharing of a learning improvement agenda presumed and was nurtured by a team-oriented culture, which principals were fostering. The kinds of conversations that would help school staff focus on instructional improvement were, and needed to be, mediated by whatever team structures were in place or could be developed.

For all these things to happen productively and in a mutually reinforcing way, principals needed to act, and see themselves, as leaders of an instructional leadership team as much as, or more than, the sole or chief instructional leader of the school. Our data point to three facets of this important responsibility: (1) forging one or more teams with instructional leadership as their central responsibility; (2) finding the principal's own role and voice in this team configuration; and (3) explicitly inviting and nurturing leadership skills and capacity.

In setting up and working through an instructional leadership team, principals were inviting people within the school building into leadership roles, both formal and informal, and nurturing their development as leaders. Staff commenting on the climate of leadership development in their New York City elementary school had this to say:

> [The principal] is big on leadership. He wants us to have as many leaders as possible in every role that's possible, which is a great thing I think. We have a lot of teachers that have a lot of talent…

and:

> Yea, there's a lot going on. Everybody's involved in something, and even in your classroom, you're a leader in that sense. You have obligations throughout the school so you're not isolated if you're not part of a specific team.

Principals like this one were building leadership in the school, and not always focused solely on instructional matters. Leadership capacity-building efforts included cultivating teacher leaders, providing new teachers with leadership opportunities, assigning teachers administrative responsibilities to empower them and provide them administrative experience, encouraging teachers to apply or aim for administrative positions, empowering learning-focused teacher leaders to help orchestrate teacher teamwork, and preparing staff for specific instructional leadership positions. By identifying different strengths in staff members, principals could work with them to develop these strengths and groom all kinds of new leaders for the school.

The Emerging Cadre of Learning-Focused Teacher Leaders

As implied by their role as leaders of instructional leadership teams, supervisory leaders worked with, and through, a complex and evolving cadre of learning-focused teacher leaders, who engaged in activities of supporting teaching and learning in classrooms. These teacher leaders are developing a niche that sits between the classroom and the school's formal leaders, and to some extent between the classroom and the district or state. From this place in the school's organization,

the teacher leaders were providing a direct and continuous layer of support for a large number of the teachers in the school. The daily work of learning-focused teacher leaders entailed one or more of the following activities: direct instructional support with individual teachers, professional development of various kinds, instructionally focused data and inquiry work, coordination of assessment and related support, and curriculum coordination.

These are often new roles or ones that increasingly transcend the traditional roles (e.g., department heads, grade-level team leaders) in a largely egalitarian organization. Increasingly, these teachers are woven into a district or school theory-of-action that has them supporting, even guiding, the improvement of teaching practice and the development of a less "private" practice of teaching. Negotiating this terrain of emerging role clarity and establishing trust relationships with colleagues is a key feature of their work.

Learning-Focused Teacher Leadership – Characteristics and Practices

The study involved close examination of the work of formally designated teacher leaders whose primary responsibilities were to support teaching practice. These teacher leaders are unique in at least two ways: first, the focus of their work is primarily or solely instructional improvement at the classroom level – hence, their primary connection is to teachers. Therefore, they are unlikely to take on the expanded, quasi-administrative roles that have been noted in the "redesign" of teachers' work (Smylie 1994). Second, they differ from principals and other administrators in that they do not have supervisory authority, but instead use their own expertise and relational trust to gain entry to classrooms and to influence instructional change.

Research over the past decade and more has established that this kind of support for instructional improvement is no small task: ambitious content standards and accountability pressures in the current reform environment require substantial professional learning on the part of teachers (e.g., Thompson and Zeuli 1999; Cohen and Hill 2000; Desimone et al. 2002; Hubbard et al. 2006). In an effort to address these learning needs, school and district leaders have sought to extend their reach through various individuals who act as coaches, in-house staff developers, model or "studio" teachers, and others who can provide help to individual teachers or small groups in a job-embedded manner (e.g., Taylor 2008; Murphy 2005). The result has been a more thoroughly distributed arrangement, in which leadership for professional learning is "stretched" across multiple roles, including both supervisory leaders and variously designated teacher leaders (Spillane et al. 2004).

Our analysis of the roles that these teacher leaders take on shows there is no single model, role, or set of activities that describes them. As would be expected, context critically shaped how learning-focused teacher leaders defined and did their work.

The specific positions that these teacher leaders held varied considerably across our sites and across elementary, middle, and high school. In some cases these individuals were instructional specialists located in the school; others were positioned as team leaders, grade-level coordinators, or academy leaders; some were regular classroom teachers who had taken on a demonstration or "model classroom" role. Most commonly, learning-focused teacher leaders acted as full- or part-time content or instructional coaches or specialists based at a specific school site. These professionals had a wide range of titles – some new, some in use for a period of time – such as:

- Literacy Coach, Math Coach, or Technology Coach
- Assessment Coordinator
- Data Specialist
- Instructional Leadership Specialist
- Instructional Liaison Specialist
- Demonstration Teacher
- Inquiry Team Member

Learning-focused teacher leaders spent their time in a number of ways. First, they rarely worked alone, but rather were members of a school-wide instructional leadership team. As such, they both helped to develop and jointly pursue a school-wide strategy for improving teaching and learning. Second, they engaged teachers and instructional practice by doing the bulk of the professional development work in the school, mostly with individuals and smaller groups, as well as occasionally the whole school. To connect with teachers, they invested considerable energy in building relationships and communicating to teachers what instructional improvement work was all about. Finally, as with their supervisory counterparts, they connected with teachers through data, and in turn, connected teachers with school and district improvement agendas in the process.

To enable their professional development activities to engage teachers productively, teacher leaders needed to get the attention, time, and trust of classroom teachers. In this regard, the work of learning-focused teacher leaders was heavily influenced by their skill in communication and ability to build collegial relationships with classroom teachers. When teachers take on leadership roles, they are positioned in complex ways between their own and others' frameworks, beliefs, and understandings about instructional work (Leander and Osborne 2008). Assuming a teacher leadership role, for the most part, challenges traditional norms of school life, such as norms of privacy and noninterference that exist among many teachers (Lortie 1975; Murphy 2005), which can be a source of tension between teacher leaders and their classroom-based colleagues. What the teacher leaders we were studying encountered mirrors the findings of descriptive studies of instructional coaching: to be effective in their role, coaches need skills in communication and relationship building (Gibson 2006; Knight 2006) and their learning is mediated by the relationships that they are able to establish on the job (Lowenhaupt and McKinney 2007).

Building such relationships hinged on establishing trust and providing supportive conditions for teachers' professional learning, and helped to mitigate the tension

that arises in the learning-focused teacher leaders' work. A teacher leader in an Atlanta elementary school noted:

> The main thing is to give support and instruction so that we can have student achievement…whatever it takes…. If it's resources you say you need, we try to get that. If you want an idea or suggestion, [you can ask], "What do you want me to do with…this comment on my lesson plan? What do you mean by that and give me an example?" As I said, the thing that gives me the most joy is when I can get into that, because… [then we're] making a difference. I really think that's what the district wants us to do and I think that's where we're trying to go with all of our many, many other tasks…. That's what we're here for - to support the teachers.

Providing support for teachers – "whatever it takes, whatever you need" – facilitated the relationships and trust that the teacher leaders sought to foster with the teaching staff. Even so, by acting as a source of support, teacher leaders could be seen as more of a supervisory administrator; in such instances, helping teachers to understand that they played a supportive rather than supervisory role was a challenging part of the teacher leaders' work. In Springfield, an ILS in an elementary school noted this tension, "Some of [the teachers] think that I am [the principal], but I'm not; I am a teacher like them."

Navigating the "Middle Ground" in Teacher Leaders' Work

The work of learning-focused teacher leaders was in the process of unfolding in the schools we studied. Previous research suggests that such teacher leader roles are likely to be emergent, multifaceted, and often ambiguous (Blachowicz et al. 2005; Coggins et al. 2003). Accordingly, what learning-focused teacher leaders were actually doing, what they thought they should be doing, and what they would like to be doing varied both across the schools and across time. Subtle dynamics were at work in positioning their work within the school, and establishing what it entailed. School leaders sought to clarify what that work can and should be; "normalize" it, by developing among school staff a widespread understanding of the work and expectation that it belongs there; and support it, helping the teacher leaders establish themselves and refine their own practice.

Positioning teacher leaders' work within the school and clarifying their role was heavily influenced by the principal. In some of the schools, the principals had a clear vision for these roles, whereas in other cases the principals seemed unsure how they might take advantage of the roles and the individuals in them to ensure their efforts were part of a coherent reform plan. We know from previous research that successful school leaders articulate a vision for shared organizational purpose and shared authority and that the ability of principals to envision new ways to do this is critical to the work of teacher leaders (Donaldson 2007; Leithwood et al. 2004). The work of learning-focused teacher leaders was clearest in instances where the school principal held such a vision and, based on it, took steps to grow staff into these roles. Even then, finding an arrangement that works often involves

experimentation, as in a middle school in which the principal and the full-time math coach decided that it would be best for the coach to take on some teaching responsibilities, to better legitimize her work in the face of some teacher resistance. The principal noted:

> She's even talked to me about … teachers who really wouldn't really take advice or talk to her beforehand, because they see the coaches more as part of administration rather than purely supportive. [They would think] someone's coming in my classroom to check on me, as opposed to help with my stuff. And so that's something we're trying to [change]. Once she became a teacher again in people's eyes [it helped] - and also she even says to me that it helps because she knows what works and what doesn't in the curriculum. So she could give advice better if she was actually doing it.

Learning-focused teacher leaders occupy a kind of "middle ground" between supervisory staff and the classroom. In a related sense, they often sit – sometimes uncomfortably – between traditional levels of the educational system, in particular, between the district central office and the teaching ranks. Their roles thus extend beyond traditional teacher responsibilities, even though they are often working on teacher contracts. In many cases, these roles have proliferated ahead of the development of formal procedures for supervision and evaluation of those who hold them. This lack of formalization of the roles can add to the tensions of learning-focused leaders and their supervisor's experience. So, at the same time that teachers are unclear about whether such teacher leaders are in an evaluative position, the teacher leaders themselves are unclear about how their work will be guided and evaluated.

Sometimes, districts tried to overcome this ambiguity by creating role descriptions (in some cases, after negotiation with the teachers' unions). But given the nature of the work and the lack of clarity about the new roles, tensions still arose. In these and other instances, the system had yet to work out how staff occupying the middle ground would be fully integrated into a multilevel educational system. The tensions differed somewhat depending on the specific middle ground the teacher leaders occupied.

More often than not, in the schools studied, the joint effect of the principals' leadership and that of the teacher leaders was to overcome the obstacles and enable team-based teacher leadership to be a constructive resource for instructional improvement in the school. While realizing their full potential was still a work in progress in most instances, the evidence of acceptance by most of their colleagues and steadily improving student performance offered testimony that this work may be paying off.

Learning to Lead for Learning Improvement

How do principals or other supervisory leaders and teacher leaders learn to do the work of leading for learning improvement in US urban schools? While some of the pathways to this work are familiar, many are influenced by the increasingly

"entrepreneurial" opportunities presented to schools and school leaders through governance strategies that devolve more decision-making authority and resources, all within a context of strict accountability. The new learning that leaders need to do – and are doing in schools like those we studied – reflects the nature of the work itself, and the pathways to leadership learning that educational systems construct.

The New Work of Learning-Focused Leadership in Urban Schools

One thing our study has accomplished is to illuminate the nature of learning-focused leadership work that is taking place within urban schools that are making progress on their respective learning improvement agendas. That work differs for individuals occupying supervisory or nonsupervisory positions. As members of instructional leadership teams, however, their joint work reflects common challenges and new forms of collective learning.

Supervisory Leaders' Work

As they worked within demanding environments, supervisory leaders – principals and assistant principals, for the most part, along with some department chairs – took on instructional leadership and support roles that went well beyond traditional supervisory activities implied by the formal staff evaluation cycle. In addition to their own direct work in guiding and supporting teacher practice, we also found them leveraging their influence on teaching and learning through their hiring, culture building, data use, and work with an instructional leadership team.

  This study revealed that principal's instructional leadership was largely a leveraged activity with and through the expertise of the other instructional teacher leaders (and, in some cases, in alignment with district colleagues). The idea that a principal can have both the content and pedagogical expertise to work directly with teachers, or model practice, in all subject areas is something many principals aspired to, but it became increasingly difficult to keep up with different curriculum reforms, not to mention the wide range of subject-matter expertise implied by the secondary school curriculum. The principals were held to expectations for knowing high-quality practice and sought ways to improve their expertise, but were also keenly invested in knowing that their influence over instructional improvement was also exercised through the instructional leadership teams they developed. Akin to the symphony conductor (Portin et al. 2003), they usually knew an instrument, but they relied on many who knew other instruments to make the symphony complete. The active participation of some principals and assistant principals in professional development as a colleague-learner provided a further avenue for them to influence instructional improvement.

Learning-Focused Teacher Leaders' Work

Teacher leadership is not a new idea, and teachers have been exercising leadership in schools for a long time. A typical pattern has been for well-respected veteran teachers who are listened to, and thereby already exercising an informal kind of leadership in the school, to be asked by the principal to assume a wider sphere of responsibility as part of the organizational infrastructure of the school, and given a stipend that enhances their base salaries, e.g., compensating them for their work heading up departments, assuming coaching assignments, or advising student activities. In contrast, within the schools we studied, teacher leaders were assuming different and varied roles – less managerial and more intricately connected to learning improvement work. As noted, there was no single model for this – the teacher leaders' daily work combined in varying ways leadership for professional development and curriculum, student instruction, assessment, model teaching, coaching and mentoring, data work and assistance with understanding data, and organizational activities.

In addition, much of the work of these teacher leaders reflected their positioning in the "middle ground," not only between the classroom and the school's supervisory leadership, but also in some respects between the classroom and district or state environment. In this position, learning-focused teacher leaders communicated and mediated the messages from all parties to the others – sometimes transmitting, sometimes translating or interpreting, what the learning improvement agenda implied for the daily work of teachers in classrooms. In this sense, they were a communication conduit between system goals and what teachers are called upon to provide for the students in their classrooms.

Almost without exception, the work of these teacher leaders was explicitly nonevaluative. While the firewall between formal evaluation and nonsupervisory support for teaching practice was not always as clearly established, generally these leaders exercised their influence through official endorsement, instructional expertise, and skill at building trusting relationships with their colleagues.

Similar to their supervisory colleagues, the learning-focused teacher leaders we studied were keenly connected to data and data interpretation for the purposes of setting direction, promoting conversations about instructional improvement, and establishing both internal and external accountability. These leaders lived and worked with data, often on a daily basis. But their work with data was not solo work: they did their work as a participant on teams and in team-based planning for instructional improvement, in an array of configurations across the schools – school instructional leadership teams, grade levels and departments, academies, professional learning communities, inquiry teams, and other configurations.

Implications for Supervisory and Nonsupervisory Leaders' Learning

This array of work for principals, assistant principals, and other staff in nonsupervisory roles has various implications for what the different leaders need to learn

to do their jobs well. On their part, *supervisory leaders*, and especially school principals, need to:

- *Rethink and expand their concept of supervision*. The work of the principals we studied suggests that formal supervision needs to be reinterpreted as one component of a larger vision of instructional leadership and support and that both engage teachers in improvement work, on the one hand, and help teacher leaders in the development of their own leadership capacity, on the other.
- *Learn to create working partnerships with various staff in the building*, all of whom do – or can – exercise leadership to some degree. These staff may or may not see themselves as leaders and may need to be invited to exercise their leadership potential. To engage them, more is involved than just allocating responsibility: it means helping staff become a functioning team guided by a common vision of instructional improvement and taking full advantage of the collective and different resources they all bring to the task.
- *Find ways to establish the* "*space*" – that is, conditions of trust, openness to critique, and focus on instruction – for learning-focused teacher leaders to do their work. Making inroads in the varied circumstances of classroom teachers across a school – struggling novice teachers, reluctant veterans, staff with critical skill deficiencies – requires special skills of teacher leaders, not only in pedagogy, but also in relationship building. But without the cultural conditions that encourage shared practices in classrooms and the space for collegial coaching, these teacher leaders can easily be marginalized. Putting those conditions in place is a major responsibility of supervisory leaders, thereby implying that cultural leadership was as important as what they did to manage their schools.
- *Create an* "*operational*" *infrastructure aligned with a learning improvement agenda*. In the schools we studied, the managerial work of allocating resources, managing time for the school, improving facilities, managing discipline and safety, and managing personnel processes were vital to ensuring that an "operational" infrastructure for learning improvement was in place. Rather than treating it as a distraction from instructional leadership, principals can use these "operational issues" as an occasion to put the right kind of resources at the disposal of teachers, teacher leaders, and other support staff.
- *Exercise greater discretion and act more entrepreneurially in the context of accountability*. As we saw in the Empowerment Schools model in New York City – and in other locations to lesser degrees – principals are being invited or compelled to make decisions regarding the direction, operation, and resources of the school within a context of increasing accountability for school performance. This situation calls on school leaders to develop strategic decision-making and entrepreneurial skills more than in the past when more of the decision-making authority resided at the district central office or with the school board.
- *Develop fluency in the use of data as a leadership tool*. Perhaps no other skill is more apparent in their work than an approach to data as a leadership tool – used to plan, diagnose learning needs, monitor performance, engage staff, and professionally develop staff. Leaders need to know what data can answer key questions

the school (or district) poses, how to use and array those data to stimulate conversation and encourage action toward valued ends, and how to help others acquire the orientation and facility to engage with data in powerful ways.

What *teacher leaders* need to know – like their role – is still evolving. However, based on teacher leadership in these four districts, a few observations can be made about the nature of their work and what it implies for what they need to learn to do.

- *Working within and across content areas*. While their work is located most often in a particular content area, teacher leaders also work across content areas when the need arises, or according to the resources and provisions of the school and district. Expertise in frequently tested content areas, e.g., often serves as a bridge to the accountability system, and intimate knowledge of the territory that will be tested enables teacher leaders to help their colleagues respond to targeted areas of performance. Their content knowledge is also useful in efforts to reinvent or reconfigure the school's curriculum by helping teachers or the school with alignment, pacing, etc.
- *Opening up instructional practice to reconsideration and improvement across a range of teacher experience*, *from novice to veteran*. Building on their knowledge of what good instruction looks like (in their respective content areas primarily), teacher leaders have to engage a variety of staff – especially novices in their first year or two of teaching but also reluctant veterans who are in need of fresh perspectives on their practice. They do so in a variety of ways, including demonstrations, co-teaching, facilitating peer observation and interactions, reviewing student work, and other means that help teaching and student learning become open to scrutiny and critique by teacher and teacher leader. Their ability to help teachers see their own instruction, with fresh eyes through data, and to use their nonsupervisory status to create a "helper presence" among teachers, are necessary tools in this pursuit.
- *Building relationships and relational trust*. Because teacher leaders work in a nonsupervisory capacity, their entry point into the classroom is by invitation only or perhaps gentle persuasion. Also, as many of their roles are new, these teacher leaders are developing a rationale and warrant for their work in the eyes of their peers, with help from the principal and even the district to position their work in the school and normalize it. Among other things, this can mean finding ways to reestablish relationships on a somewhat different footing with colleagues they have known for years. Even with the enabling conditions, understandable tensions arise in the "middle ground" these leaders occupy, and they have to become adept at navigating these tensions and developing the trust of their colleagues so that other teachers will seek to access their expertise.
- *Communicating as well as translating school (and district) learning improvement agendas*. Sometimes complicating the task of developing trusting relationships, these teacher leaders often sit at an interface between classroom work and supervisory leaders' priorities, and also the district's expectations for performance and instructional improvement, which means that the teacher leaders inescapably become a kind of conduit for reform messages. In this capacity, they

need to deliver reform messages responsibly with appropriate translation and without becoming the accessories of a larger system so that the larger reform messages are tailored to the unique circumstances and capabilities of the teacher(s) they are dealing with.

- *Working in differentiated instructional leadership teams*. So much of this leadership work grows out of a shared image of how teaching and learning can be improved, and it is often done by more than one individual in the building. What is more, instructional leadership teams tend to bring together staff with different kinds of expertise, not to mention different positions in the building. The accomplished teaching staff who are invited to exercise instructional leadership are not necessarily well versed in team-based collaborative work. They need to hone these skills, if they are to deliver on their promise.

As the work of learning improvement moves forward in urban schools, policy makers, leaders, and others who care about the reform of public education can find ways to focus these support systems on the new learning that the instructional leadership cadre is doing.

Pathways for School Leaders' Learning

The nature of school leaders' work and implications noted above represent a substantial amount of new learning for most supervisory and nonsupervisory leaders in the kinds of schools we studied. Other than the "school of hard knocks" – the time-honored, default approach to leaders' learning in urban schools – what might support these leaders' attempts to imagine and inhabit different, more learning-focused roles, in their respective schools? While we did not set out to specifically examine the preparatory experiences or ongoing learning of supervisory or nonsupervisory leaders, we did pay attention to what they described as the sources of their ideas and expertise, as well as how their work was supported (if at all), and we did take note of the approaches that the districts were taking to support the preparation and ongoing learning of these leaders.

Three sources of support for leaders' ongoing professional learning were obvious: central office support systems, peer and professional networks, and relationships with external organizations:

- *Central office support systems*. Detailed more fully in a companion study (Honig et al. 2010), the districts we studied had established some different structures for offering direct support to school leaders, especially principals. For example, "Network" arrangements in one district and "School Reform Team" arrangements in another provided ready access to expertise in leadership, management, and instructional support of various kinds, often through learning-focused partnership relationships with district staff. The school leaders took advantage of these resources to varying degrees.
- *Peer and professional networks*. Our research made it clear that school leaders leaned on, and learned from, respected peers, both those they had come to know

over the years and others with whom they were organizationally linked, e.g., through networked arrangements that linked groups of schools or role-alike colleagues together, within or across schools. The power of these lateral peer relationships was apparent in the support systems of both teacher leaders and school principals.

- *Relationships with external organizations* (*e.g.*, *nonprofit groups*, *universities*). Reflecting the fact that the districts encouraged, to varying degrees, connections between schools and external groups or organizations that could offer instructional expertise or other improvement resources, the school leaders made extensive use of the training, advice, or mentorship these organizations offered. In particular, nonprofit groups with a long track record of work in school improvement, student support, or instruction in particular content areas (e.g., literacy, the arts) were a major source of support for the learning of school leaders who were trying to see where and how to mobilize effort for learning improvement.

The initial preparation of individuals for supervisory administrative positions was also a prominent feature of the landscape. Three of the four districts had constructed their own principal preparation programs (the Superintendent's Academy for Building Leaders in Education Program in Atlanta, the Springfield Leadership Institute, and the New York City Leadership Academy) or encouraged other innovative program alternatives, e.g., New Leaders for New Schools and a Wallace Foundation-funded leadership development continuum for administrators in one of the former regions in the New York City school system. Less elaborate, but nonetheless formal, training was mounted in several instances for individuals about to assume particular new teacher leader roles, as in the case of Springfield, which offered Instructional Leadership Specialist (ILS) training for staff who would take on the new ILS positions in the district's schools. All these routes afforded a pathway to the kinds of learning-focused work that we have described.

Underlying these preparation pathways are new images of the nature of the school leaders' work that articulate powerfully what our school leaders were reaching for. Systems of support for this new kind of leadership work are emerging and our research has begun to document what these systems can look like. Their further development will take the collaborative efforts of many players, especially central office leaders, universities, and unions, not to mention the school leaders themselves, who are both the targets of leadership support and providers of it to their respective instructional leadership teams. The evidence from the schools we studied suggests that progress is being made on this leadership learning agenda. But there is much more work to do.

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Chapter 30
Nordic Superintendents' Leadership Roles: Cross-National Comparisons

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The Governance System in the Nordic Countries

Decentralization

The regulation of the Nordic school systems has, during the last two decades, changed in many ways. At the beginning of the 1990s there was a concerted move to decentralize finances, personnel management and other areas from state level to local (municipal) level and in many cases from there further on to school level. This was introduced at a time when several countries were in a difficult economic situation, especially at the national level. At the end of the 1990s, a re-centralization took place in some of these countries.

There are several reasons behind the move to decentralization, Weiler (1988, 1990) suggests three motives for decentralization, all intertwined with one another:

- The *democratization* motive argues for the renewal of democratic influence – through decentralization political decision making is close to where education takes place.
- The *efficiency* motive argues that decentralization leads to better distribution of resources for reaching given goals.

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- The *professional* motive argues that changes in knowledge volume, and structure demand more professional control over educational content and methods for learning.

A few examples may illustrate this. The increased influence of parents at school level through the organization of school boards, the free choice of schools (in Sweden, Denmark, and Finland), the goal and result-oriented system provides the focus for professional capabilities and responsibilities at different levels within the system, especially for teachers and principals. In Denmark it was argued that if the state decentralized tasks to schools, the educational administration staff at municipality level could be reduced. Both in Denmark and Finland, a form of restructuring of public management took place involving 175 municipalities in Denmark being merged into 98 larger units and in Finland 415 municipalities being merged into 365.

A decentralization of the education system changes the balance between professional and political power at all levels in the system. The responsibility and professional ability, for principals and teachers, are enhanced at the same time as evaluation becomes an important instrument for governing and… *In using more control and in seeing the educational system as being in a global competition, the politics of education will be more and more reactive in its scope…*(Lundgren 2007). In a period, which includes a strong re-centralization trend as to the content of schools (curricula and accountability), schools find themselves in charge of finances, human resources and day-to-day management, and at the same time municipalities have become an important factor in the ministry's "quality assurance system." (See Chap. 5.)

There are several similarities in governance systems in the Nordic countries but at the same time differences among the countries as shown above. A municipality runs its operation based on objectives and frameworks established by Parliament and Government. There is a freedom in determining how the operation is to be organized in order to achieve its objectives. For example: what resources shall be used, how it will be organized, how the premises are designed and to some extent the allocation of staff. Regardless of how a municipality decides to run and organize its work it must guarantee an equivalent educational provision for all. In the Nordic countries legislation at the beginning of the 1990s abolished all detailed task lists concerning the work of leading educational officials in municipalities (Larsen and Offerdal 2000; Nihlfors 2003; Souri 2009). The municipality decides in what way the administration of education should be organized. The deregulation of the superintendent was one of several decisions that have been taken in the Nordic parliaments over the last decades with regard to different parts of the school system, from preschool to vocational education. These bills and regulations from the government are expected to be implemented in the municipality and are thus the responsibility of the local political board and the superintendent.

Changes in the Nordic countries are in many aspects mirror of changes in the global arena, such as changes in response to the world economy, the Bologna process, and increasing international comparison of results in different subjects in relation to school success.

Different Levels in the Governance of Schools

Parliament has the legislative power and the Government implements decisions of the Parliament. The Education Acts, regulations, curricula, and syllabi are examples of national steering documents in the Nordic countries. *The Education Acts* set out the required tasks for differing forms of school, the demands that are placed on the quality of these operations and the responsibilities to be undertaken by the municipalities and the schools, in other words, principals and teachers. The tasks, responsibilities, and demands may include comprehensive objectives and assignments for the education of children, young people and adults, rules for students and parents, for example, compulsory education, and the right to education. As to the detail, there is variation among the Nordic countries. For example, in Denmark only parts of the Education Act apply to independent schools but in Finland and Sweden the same education act applies to both public and private schools.

In most cases the municipality forms the school district in the Nordic countries. The political governance of the administration is carried out by a school board or education committee with responsibility for the whole municipality, that is, the school district. Again there is variation with regard to the name and position of the education committees in the municipal organizations in the Nordic countries and also within the same country. Principals, teachers, and others who work in schools have considerable freedom to organize the work and to choose methods and forms of working. This is carried out in cooperation with the principals and the students, parents, school boards, and the surrounding society.

Quality and Accountability

Decentralization brings with it differing degrees of freedom as well as variation among municipalities in local education policy making. On the other hand, as noted by some scholars, the state to some extent has changed the mode of regulation in the direction of more subtle and indirect steering instruments (Christensen and Lægreid 2001; Helgøy et al. 2007).

Every year, municipalities and the country councils follow up and assess their educational operations in various ways, for example through quality reports, sample tests or self-assessment. Again, forms vary among Nordic countries. In Sweden the new National Agency for School Inspection, introduced in 2009, inspects a large number of schools every year. In Finland there have been no school inspections since 1983. The National Agencies for Education carry out national follow-ups and evaluations in all Nordic countries. In Finland there is also a special statutory independent Educational Evaluation Council for educational evaluation and development.

The Danish Government has developed a quality assurance system under the headline of a "culture of evaluation" with more national tests and a Quality Report system.

The Danish School Council (under the Ministry of Education) lays out guidelines for how municipalities should report on quality annually. One important aspect of this reporting is that municipalities ask schools to self-evaluate as the foundation for the municipal report. Some of the reporting items are very clearly laid out and others are more open to schools interpretation. In this way the Quality Report is a good example of contract-steering.

A systemic evaluation regime has been established throughout all Nordic countries, which means that local government, schools, teachers and pupils are subject to external evaluation and self-evaluation (Hudson 2007). Moreover, the state uses financial resource allocation in combination with reporting procedures as an indirect control instrument, where municipalities have to account for their use of financial costs and human resources to state agencies on a yearly basis. Finally, accountability is strengthened through making results from national tests and evaluations available on special websites although this is not the case in Finland, that does not have national tests. For example, in Norway there is also a national pupil inspectors' scheme that displays the pupil's perceptions of the quality of teaching and their own learning progress. These data are made publicly available through national websites (Koritzinsky 2001). This stream of performance and poll data can be retrieved by media and stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

Taken together, the present governance model appears to be a joint regulatory enterprise between the state, through a range of "soft" steering instruments and quality control, and the municipality sector through direct ownership and decentralized decision making power. There is a "mixed mode" of regulation that is important for understanding the current context of superintendent leadership in different municipalities in the Nordic countries.

Two Analytic Tools

A decentralization of the education system changes the balance between professional and political power at all levels in the system. Two models are used to illustrate this and are also used as a tool for the analysis. The first model (see Fig. 30.1) describes the governance of an education system in two dimensions and illustrates where and who has the power in the system.

Quadrant A represents strong central control. Quadrant D represents strong political control at the central level but in a more decentralized form. Strong professional control is also characteristic of quadrant B, but in this instance, educational administrators are in a strong position when it comes to formulating the national policy for education, as this is an administration built on experience, with well-trained officials (including teachers). Quadrant C typifies an education system built on a strong professional teaching establishment that bears the responsibility for formulating and realizing these goals for curricula at the local level (DuRietz et al. 1987).

Fig. 30.1 Relationship of power dimensions and also two dimensions in the responsibility of the school sector (DuRietz et al. 1987)
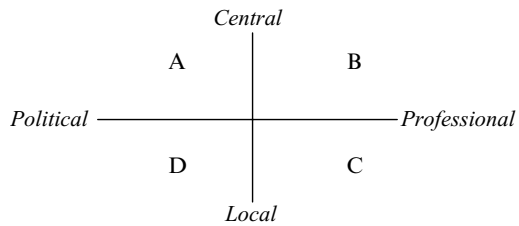
Basically there are four interacting instruments for political governance of educational systems (Lundgren 1981):

- The legal system, which is central to the other three;
- The economic system
- The ideological system (goals and content)
- The evaluation system.

Lundgren (2007) outlines some characteristics of centralized systems; they are governed by resources, strongly regulated and framed. The ideological system is expressed in detailed curricula and textbooks and teacher education. Decentralization or greater market competition usually results in a deregulation or at least a re-regulation. *What remains for the centre in a decentralized system is to strengthen the ideological system and the evaluation system…if the educational system is to serve the purpose of promoting equality and reproducing a common value base* (Lundgren 2007).

The government formulates and makes decisions with regard to educational goals and content at the national level, whereas each municipality formulates its own goals in a school plan or other forms of planning. The *formulation arena*, where the formulation of educational goals and decisions regarding these and their content are formed, takes place at national level, municipal level and school level – for each of their different sections or units. *Realization* arenas are those arenas where decisions are implemented or come to fruition. More and more people are interpreting decisions; many actors are involved in different processes. Another arena arises in this connection, and that is the *mediation* arena where decisions are mediated, interpreted, and transformed. Tension between the government and municipal authorities regarding the degree of political and professional responsibility is illustrated by Fig. 30.2.

With the passing of time, different parts of the governing system are managed at different levels in the school sector (Fig. 30.2). The distribution of responsibility during the 1990s marks a period of professional control (G) with regard to curricula, as well as a move to the municipality's mandatory political responsibility (E). The National Agency for Education (B) supervises activities with representatives from the municipalities. In some Nordic countries school inspectors (C) have begun to visit individual schools. During the 1990s principals and teachers (G), together with students and parents were, in two of the Nordic countries, given a clear
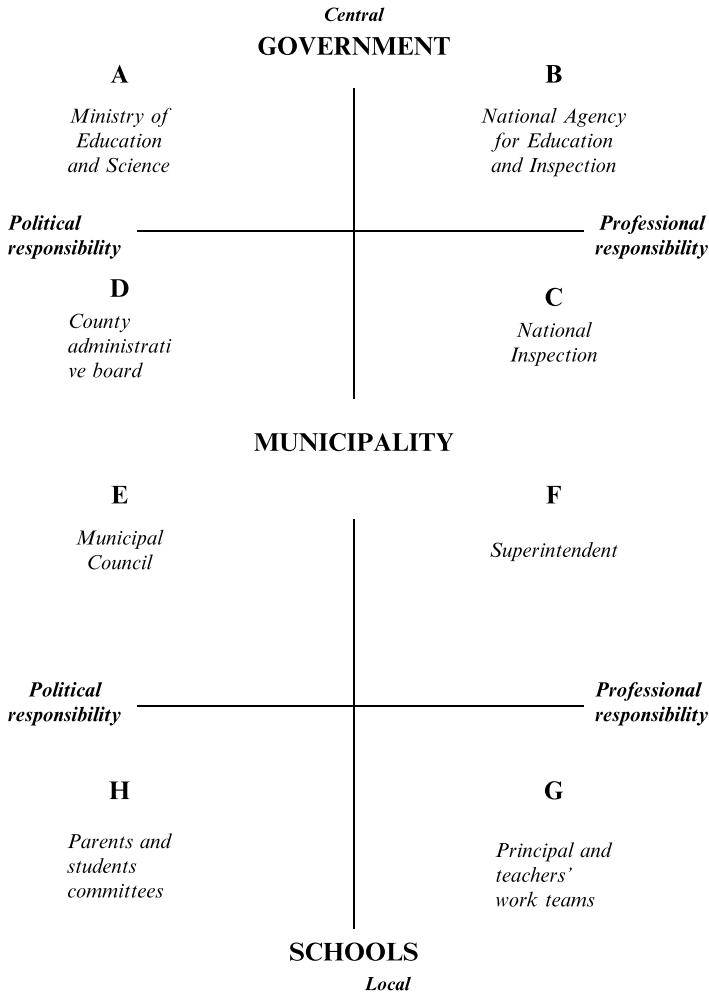
Fig. 30.2 Distribution of responsibility within the government's control (Nihlfors 2003)

responsibility for carrying out activities under the overall mandatory responsibility of the municipality (E).

The government addresses both the political and the professional arena – both in respect of groups and individual professionals. Around and within these levels and actors, there are different interest groups that affect the governance process. Two other examples: The government in Sweden addresses principals, teachers and working teams directly via laws on education and curricula, as well as indirectly by means of regulations directed at schools via municipal councils. According to the government bill on responsibility, the fact that curricula are primarily for teachers does not mean that teachers are not under the direction of their respective munici-palities. The Danish system is similar to the Swedish. There is however another

important consideration: Agreements on teachers and principals' wages and working conditions are regulated through negotiations between the employer (The National Association of Municipalities) and the unions (Teachers Union and Principals Association) at national, municipal and also at school level.

In Finland, the autonomy and responsibility of the municipalities has strengthened all decision making at the municipality level. National legislation edicts and goals set the framework in which the municipalities have to operate. How the municipalities provide educational services is for the municipalities to decide, as long as they follow national guidelines and agreements. While there appears to be a consistent national will, decision making is also progressively including various stakeholders, both at national and local level. In an effort to guarantee equity across the country municipalities try to ensure a commonality of curriculum.

The Superintendent

While superintendents have in a sense become "invisible" in the regulation of schools, this does not mean that the superintendent has disappeared. One of the questions in our research was to define the position and function of what we here call the superintendent in today's governance of schools. We started with a definition of the function that refers to *the position that is directly subordinated to a municipal political committee or board. The persons holding this position are responsible for all education or a sector of education within the entire municipality in the Nordic countries.* We have identified superintendents with different titles and different areas of responsibility. The school superintendent is in most municipalities a position in the administrative hierarchy, subordinated to the chief executive officer (CEO) of the whole municipality, and head of the principals. The school superintendent leads the interface between the CEO and the principals in a chain of command (see Fig. 30.2).

The structure of this public sector is complex. It is a hierarchical structure inasmuch as decisions made by Parliament and the government are superior to those of municipalities and the school sector. This does not automatically mean, however, that superior decisions are carried out in a simple or straightforward way. Rather, the number of levels of responsibility, as well as the different control processes, suggest the contrary. As the degree of expected participation in a democratic process rises, conflicts and negotiations become the rule rather than the exception.

Review of Relevant Studies

Some studies have been carried out on the situation for the superintendent over the last two decades. One study is based on a questionnaire sent to all superintendents in Sweden who had served during the entire period of the 1990s (Nihlfors 2003),

most of whom had a background as teachers and principals. They had experience of several administrative organizations that during the 1990s enjoyed differing political majorities. The two most common models were: one superintendent serving one political board or two superintendents serving two boards in the municipality. Most of the superintendents had no particular mandate from above – nor any superior, apart from the political leadership. It was argued that a close and positive spirit of co-operation with political leadership was necessary, and that the distribution of political and professional roles had to be made clear. They saw themselves as the guarantors of educational activities, holding a position that lay between the government, municipalities, and the school sector. The position included more than just being a municipal head of administration. One way in which the superintendents carried out their duties during the 1990s was by balancing government and municipal interests and mediating political and professional responsibilities. The balancing was done by formulating their own tasks, firmly establishing them with the chairperson of the education committee and drawing up a strategy with the trade union school development group.

Bredeson and Johansson (1997) have, from the mid-1990s, conducted multiple studies comparing the United States and Swedish superintendents' leadership. They conclude that Swedish superintendent leadership has traditionally been legitimated through the imprimatur of the state and its authority. With the decentralization of authority to municipalities, superintendents have become much more vulnerable, and accordingly more attuned, to local political pressures. The purpose of their latest cross-national study (Bredeson et al. 2009) was to examine how context – geographic, political, demographic, organizational, psychological, and cultural – affects the nature of professional work and leadership of school superintendents. They point out that personal characteristics such as gender, age, prior experience, and ethnicity are important factors to an understanding of school superintendent leadership. The focus in this investigation centered on the varying contexts in which district administrators' work. From an empirical perspective, they were interested in exploring the degree to which various aspects of context in the US and in Sweden help to explain important differences within and across work priorities and demands reported by superintendents in earlier studies.

Other studies have documented work priorities, preferences, and tasks of superintendents [see for example, Björk and Kowalski (2005), Bredeson and Kose (2007), Bredeson et al. (2004), Cooper et al. (2000), Glass et al. (2000), Johnson (1996), Peterson and Barnett (2005) and Orr (2002)]. These descriptive studies document common elements in the work of superintendents and at the same time conclude that the superintendency is so very different from district to district that making generalizations is hazardous. In fact, there is no such thing as *the* superintendency; instead, there are many superintendencies. Often they are more unlike, than like, each other (Glass et al. 2000).

What is less well known is how superintendents' leadership comes to be expressed very differently given the varying contexts of their administrative work. It seems reasonable to assert that, despite similar tasks and functions commonly

used to describe what school superintendents do, each district leader enacts his or her administrative role uniquely given such factors as district size, community demographics, organizational culture, history, geography, and local political realities, not to mention individual personalization of the role. For example, regardless of school district size, superintendents cite financial issues as the most challenging problem(s) they face (Bredeson and Kose 2007; Bredeson et al. 2005; Glass et al. 2000). The interview data provide evidence that the tasks and leadership behavior of superintendents are deeply embedded in context – geographic, political, demographic, organizational, cultural, and psychological. Successful superintendents exhibit context-responsive leadership in which they are actors who continually navigate and interact with uncertain and challenging situations of practice.

A review of the literature on the work of school superintendents reveals a discrepancy between what superintendents say is important and what they actually spend their time doing. Murphy (1989), for example, noted that superintendents spend the majority of time on issues not directly related to curriculum and instruction. He concluded that instructional leadership at the district level was managed more by default than by design. Superintendents ranked curriculum development as a top priority, but then correspondingly ranked it low in terms of how they actually spent their time (Bredeson 1996; Bredeson and Johansson 1998; Hauglund 1987). The literature also suggests that superintendents be directly involved in curriculum and instruction, the technical core of the school (Murphy and Hallinger 1988) with priority given to current educational reform (Björk 1990; Hord 1990; Kowalski 1998; Latham and Holloway 1999; Wimpleberg 1988).

Transferring responsibility for primary and secondary education to the municipality has also brought new and different demands to the role of superintendent. Cregård (1996) shows that the role of superintendent, as head of the central municipal school office, is much clearer than before and a key person in the education system. The position carries with it the responsibility to see to that all the schools in the municipality meet the goals and demands set by the state. The shift of power to the municipality also meant that new demands have to be met at the local political level. The superintendent, and indeed principals, serves two masters – one national and one local. While decentralization and deregulation of the school system brings a greater degree of freedom for the superintendent, they have also placed new demands on him/her to take the initiative, to make strategic decisions, and to lead school development in the municipality (Johansson 2000).

In Finland the superintendency had not been at the focus of national or international research until the study conducted by Kanervio and Risku (2009). Some characteristics of superintendence can however be found in other national and international studies in Finland. Local Finland (The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities) published a statistical report on the administration of general education in Finnish municipalities in 1995 (Pirhonen and Janhunen 1995). According to that study superintendence was in many municipalities a joint arrangement either with the principalship of a school or with the superintendence of another municipality. Around 32% of superintendents were working also as

principals and around 14% of the municipalities shared the same superintendent. Two reports by the National Board of Education as to the status of evaluating educational services at the local level included information on the work of superintendents in Finnish municipalities. One of these studies (Rajanen 2000) showed that the existence of a full-time superintendent in the municipality had a significant relationship with the evaluation of education services at the local level. The evidence was that using evaluation outcomes for the strategic development of educational services, (particularly the collection and analysis of information), the inadequacy of evaluation information and financial shortages was a source of problems. The number of superintendents as a whole, and especially those with pedagogic and administrative expertise, declined over the entire 1990s. The other study (Löfström et al. 2005) indicated that the decline of human resources in the municipal superintendent offices continued during the 2000s. Lack of human resources, the insufficiency of evaluation skills, and the shortage of economic resources were considered to be the main obstacles to evaluating educational services at local level. As part of the National Project for Restructuring Municipalities and Services, a report was published by Local Finland on how the project was changing the provision and management of general education in Finnish municipalities in 2008 including superintendence (Karvonen et al. 2009). The study shows that the ways educational services are produced in Finnish municipalities are undergoing nationwide radical changes, demanding more from superintendents.

It is widely acknowledged that context matters and that it affects leadership practices. Descriptive studies have documented common elements in the work of superintendents. What is less well known are the differing forms that superintendents' leadership may take in the varying contexts of their administrative work. In a cross-national study between the US and Sweden (Bredeson et al. 2009), the relationship between variations in context and the nature of professional work and leadership of school superintendents was examined. In particular, the study was designed to identify the specific variations in context which influence superintendents' leadership, and to examine how superintendents respond to differences in context. The findings illustrate that the work of superintendents is similar but different. The superintendents described common primary work priorities, challenges and contextual variations which influenced their practice. Yet, differences in district size, organizational culture, community characteristics, and geographic location significantly influenced their leadership practices. The study provides illustrative examples of different kinds of superintendent leadership supporting the argument that leadership is both embedded in, and influenced by, context. The study also furthers the authors' emerging theory of context-responsive leadership. Context-responsive leadership is practical wisdom in action. It reflects a complex mix of knowledge, skills and dispositions, and is expressed through interaction with dynamic contextual variables (Bredeson et al. 2009). Further research is required to determine how leaders can best acquire a context-responsive approach to leadership.

A Study of School Superintendents in the Nordic Countries: Some Results

Our Nordic superintendent surveys have built on earlier research while also taking national context into account. One basis for the questionnaire, together with the earlier research presented above, was the research on the superintendent's work by the University of Kentucky, the American Association of School Administrators (i.e. Glass et al. 2000), Kentucky Department of Education and Kentucky School Boards Association.

The survey was carried out in Finland in 2008 (Kanervio and Risku 2009) and in Denmark, Norway and Sweden in 2009. The content of the survey in each country differed due to the national context. Most parts are the same or very similar to making it possible to draw comparisons. The surveys had a response rate in all countries between 60% and 70%.

Background of the Superintendent

The proportion of female superintendency is around 50% in Finland and about 40% in Norway and Sweden. Most of the superintendents in the Nordic countries are between 46 and 66 years of age. Years spent in the post of superintendent vary from Denmark where only a few have spent more than 10 years in post and many have served for less than 5 years to Finland where one superintendent has worked 37 years and the average was 10 years.

Around 30% in Sweden, and 42% in Denmark, have been a superintendent in two to three different municipalities but most of them have served in only one municipality. About half of the superintendents in Finland were recruited to their present position from inside their present municipality, and about half from outside the municipality. Most have worked in only one (66%) or two (25%) municipalities as a superintendent. The most common reason for moving to a new post is to be able to move to a larger municipality. In Norway most of the superintendents' careers have taken place within the same municipality (in 85% of the cases). Eighty-five percent of the superintendents in the sample were recruited to their position within the education system, and 40% of them have been in their position for more than 5 years.

The background of a superintendent follows a similar pattern. They have been teachers, principals and subsequently applied for the top position. Many of the superintendents in Sweden have continued their studies at the university after their first degree. The career pattern is the same for 43% of the Finnish superintendents. Around 80% of the Finnish superintendents have a higher university degree (7% have licentiate degree and 4% doctoral degree). About one-third of the superintendents in Finland also have work experience outside of educational services. Less than 10% of the Swedish superintendents have qualifications in a field other than education.

In Norway, the typical educational background is as a teacher at higher level standing and this is similarly the case in Denmark. More than 95% have teacher education as their professional background. 60% have taken further formal education such as a master's of education. Ninety percent of the superintendents have a background in schools as principals.

Taken together, our findings confirm a strong pattern of institutional path-dependency when it comes to recruitment and in the relation to the career paths of school superintendents, this we see as a noteworthy finding.

Levels in the System

The organization in the municipalities differs within countries as well as between them. In some municipalities all different school forms are included in one political board (from preschool to adult education) while in others there are different boards for preschool, compulsory school, upper secondary school and adult education. Pre-school and compulsory school can be together in one board and upper secondary school and adult education in another board. In some municipalities only upper secondary schools and adult education is handled at the municipality level while the other school forms are divided into several different Municipal District Councils. Here are some examples from Sweden:

- One superintendent – one board.
- Two superintendents – two boards.
- One superintendent – two boards.
- Two superintendents – one board.
- Municipal District Councils.
- Coordination on regional/county level (especially of upper secondary schools).

Most superintendents in Finland (71%), especially in smaller municipalities, are responsible for a very broad field and work with a board that has a wide area of responsibility including general education as well as early childhood education, adult education, culture, youth services, and sports. In Demark the picture is very diverse. Many Boards have a range of responsibilities: schools, special needs institutions and child care, which encompasses culture and leisure time activities. A variety of labels and compositions of policy boards is also the case in Norway. Less than 10% reported that they had maintained the traditional policy structure. However, when investigating the actual policy domains coupled to the new boards, a more traditional pattern became apparent. More than 90% reported that the jurisdiction of their current board comprised primary school and kindergarten services, whereas more than 80% added adult education and immigrant education to the board's responsibilities.

In the 1990s the superintendent in Sweden usually worked directly under the supervision of a committee or board, and did not have any other intermediate official level between themselves and the committee. At the same time, the superintendent,

as employed by the municipality was subordinate to the municipal director. A shift seems to have taken place during the last decade. Over 50% of the respondents now say that they are working directly under the municipal director. In Denmark the equivalent figure was only 11%. It is perhaps relevant that most superintendents in the Danish survey were qualified teachers and that the percentage of leaders above them with a finance, or legal, education has rapidly risen since 2007 when municipalities steepened hierarchies and employed fewer chiefs.

Most of the superintendents in Sweden and Denmark do not have any written 'job description' (33% Danish and 36% Swedish superintendents have a written job description). In Sweden there is an increased number (compared with 2003) who do have a job description, but still it is a minority overall. In Finland most of the superintendents (90%) have a written job description but the job descriptions vary significantly because municipalities may organize their management autonomously. An interesting question which arises is how superintendents are guided when there are no explicit mandates. As the survey in Denmark, Norway and Sweden reveals, political decisions at board level, in respect of school development plans, national steering documents, and delegation are based on personal experience.

Expectations from the Board

When superintendents were asked about expectations held of them by the board and their understanding of the role of the superintendent, their expectations were found to range across 12 different roles: pedagogical leadership; leading principals in their pedagogical leadership; cooperation with the surrounding society; creating changes that lead to a better economic situation; creating conditions which lead to better results in national tests; developing and implementing national reforms; developing and implementing local initiatives and reforms; evaluating results of national decisions on the local level; evaluating results of local initiatives and reforms; creating prerequisites for cooperation with other municipality actors. Three of these expectations are given emphasis in Sweden: creating changes in the organization that leads to better economy of delivery; better results on national tests and cooperation with the board and the surrounding society. Five of these expectations in Denmark were: developing and implementing local initiatives and reforms; creating the basis for co-operation with other municipal agencies; evaluating results of local initiatives and reforms; co-operating with the board and the surrounding society; leading school leaders' pedagogical leadership. In Finland boards expect the superintendents to be managers of administration and finance (96%) and leaders of development (92%). Although superintendents do not seem to be able to concentrate on pedagogical leadership, it is however typically expected by the boards (73%). There are also expectations as to political leadership including collaboration with the board and the surrounding community (30%) and on leading stakeholder groups (16%).

Tasks and Responsibilities

When the Swedish superintendents were asked to *rank the five most important tasks for you as a superintendent* they were offered 11 alternatives: contact with local citizens, real estate and construction issues, administration of employees, planning and goal-setting, budget and financing, school development, educational leadership, staff development/competence plans, legal affairs, policy issues, board skills/competence development and evaluation of students' school performance. The three tasks that came out clearly as the top three in Sweden were: budget and financing of schools, school development, planning and goal-setting. It was budgeting and school development that occupied most superintendents' time. The areas they themselves found most interesting were school development, pedagogical leadership, and planning and goal-setting. When the Norwegian superintendents were asked to *rank the five most important tasks,* the following came out as the top five: planning and goal-setting, budget and financing of schools, competence management and recruitment, policy implementation, and pedagogical leadership. The areas they themselves found most interesting were budgeting and financing, planning and goal-setting, change management, competence management and recruitment and pedagogical leadership. It is worth noting that external oriented tasks, such as evaluation and assessment of student achievements, collaboration with parent representatives and community relationships were consistently given low scores in our data. In Denmark similar tendencies were evident together with a strong aversion to quality assurance as the link between political decisions and schools.

Respondents in Norway were asked to assess the extent to which their work was influenced by a range of predefined factors: the municipality's own evaluations and quality reports, national test data (on their pupils), national evaluations, international tests (e.g. PISA and TIMSS), demands from parents, recommendations, and advice from consultants and research results. Each of the factors is measured by a standardized scale from "very little extent" to "very large extent". Sixty-four percent of respondents perceive high external influence from local policy demands, whereas 58% highlighted the results of their pupils in national tests. The third strongest factor was demands from parents, alongside demands from national evaluations, scoring high among 53% of the respondents. In the Finnish study superintendents were asked to describe the most essential tasks in their job with open-ended responses. Most of the descriptions referred to educational and cultural services (69%). The rest referred to services outside education and cultural services, such as participating in the general administration of the municipality, managing day care and early childhood education, public transport and/or data processing. Superintendents are responsible for school transport (82%), school premises (72%), student care (69%), school food (37%), and 22% for cleaning. The most typical task area for the Finnish superintendents was administration (60%), managing finance, the production of services, general and personnel administration, and the work of the education committee. Leading development and quality assurance (12%), strategic leadership (6%), pedagogic leadership (4%) and working in networks (4%) were also mentioned

as central tasks. Finnish superintendents seem to regard themselves especially as facilitators, leaving a lot of freedom for the schools and principals.

Relations with Principals

The Swedish superintendents were asked about which tasks they gave highest priority to (priorities 1–3) in *relation to the principals*. Below we only focus on their first priority. There are five areas listed here in no particular priority order coaching (to give them strength and support), working with goals and results (including discussions about quality), the need for good working conditions (organization, structure), school development and budget issues (both as working conditions and keeping the budget). In Denmark five areas were given priority: leadership development; dialogue on shared visions; developing the room for leadership and involvement of school leaders in municipal leadership; day-to-day questions, and school development.

In Norway, superintendents gave highest priority to their relationship with their school principals: 80% of the sample gave high ranking to the following tasks: clarification of political expectations of principals, highlighting educational vision for principals, conveying high expectations to staff and students and supporting school principals individually. For the Finnish superintendents' decision making, principals' views are seen as the highest priority. Superintendents try to support the principals especially by offering the schools good working conditions (71%), promoting principals' professional development (66%) and giving the schools more administrative help (53%).

Relations to Learners

The highest priority in relation to the *learners* is, in the Swedish case, that they work actively on issues of particular concern for learners, ensure that principals enjoy good working conditions and at the same time challenging the organization. Several superintendents said that they gave priority to enhancing issues of democracy, values, pupil influence, and responsibility. Some examples of issues of concern are legal security for the learners, health care, and individual matters that the principals wished to raise. Some examples of the strategies used were a focus on results, discussion of the conclusions of quality reports, and initiating school development-planning. Good working conditions include the learning environment, recruiting and competence development of staff, allocation of money and protecting, and arguing for more resources for the educational sector. To do this they stimulate and challenge leaders and also act as a coach for them. The Danish picture is diverse but broadly one can suggest five categories most likely to be mentioned; focusing broadly on school development; focusing school leaders and administration on matters of quality and evaluation; working on the quality report and dialogue with school leaders; making sure that the right teachers are employed and empowered; creating municipal policies for schools and giving advice to the political board.

Finnish superintendents appear to place a lot of value on parents' and students' opinions and value their participation in developing educational services. Concerning learners, topical issues for the superintendents were reaching the productivity demands of the municipality, meeting changing values in society, helping parents with their problems with their children, opposing marginalization and ensuring school safety. Concerning the quality of educational services and the influence of parents and students, superintendents were optimistic about the future: things would, they felt, either become better, or at least remain at the present level.

Co-workers

How many people are working with these tasks mentioned above? Around 50% of the superintendents in Sweden have between one and ten co-workers, 70% if we include 11–20 co-workers. This depends on the size of the municipality. Close to 50% of the municipalities have up to 15,000 inhabitants. Irrespective of this, 70% of the superintendents said that one or two co-workers were dealing with follow-up, evaluation, and quality issues related to students' learning. On average in Denmark, there are 1.5 employers occupied with quality and evaluation of school in the school districts, ranging from 0 to 10 employers in municipalities of 30,000 (the minimum size of a municipality) to 200,000 inhabitants.

About 80% of the Norwegian superintendents reported that their central school office was staffed by between one and three people in full-time positions. In contrast, only 5% of them worked in a municipality administration with more than six co-workers. Thus, the predominant picture is of small-scale administrative, pedagogical and systemic capacities at the municipal level, mirroring the diverse commune structure in Norway. The Finnish municipality school offices are normally understaffed. According to the study by Kanervio and Risku (2009) 5% of municipalities did not have anyone employed in the school office and 22% of the superintendents worked alone. In 27% of the municipalities the superintendent had one co-worker and in 15%, two co-workers. In all, the number of superintendents' co-workers in Finnish municipalities ranged from 0 to 87. There was wide variation among the municipalities. In some municipalities with 5,000–10,000 inhabitants there could be no one in the municipal school office while in some other municipalities of the same size there might be five.

The Number of Principals, and the Level Between the Superintendent and the Principals

The number of principals within any given superintendent's jurisdiction differs widely. Most of the superintendents in Sweden (77%) have between 1 and 25 principals in their jurisdiction, while in Denmark almost 90% have between 6 and 20 principals under them. At the same time a few superintendents in Sweden have

anything from 26 to 150 principals. In Norway 64% of the superintendents are the units of command for the school principals in their municipality. However, the number of school principals that the superintendent is responsible for differs substantially across the municipalities: 39% of the sample is responsible for one to three principals, whereas 19% have six to ten principals. Taken together 82% were in charge of ten or fewer principals.

Teaching and principals' staffing in Finnish municipalities vary from 1 to 4,000 with an average size of 186 employees. Most schools (83%) have their own principals while assistant principals are infrequent (14%). Only a few schools (16%) have their own school boards. Regional coordinating principals (in 6% of the municipalities) and leading school-level principals (1%) are also rare. Less than 40% of superintendents in Sweden and only 4% in Denmark have an intermediate authority between themselves and the principals.

Most of the superintendents, including those with an intermediate level between them and principals, hold regular conferences with the principals at least once a month. Concerning the purpose of these meetings, 15 options were given in the questionnaire. The three which was predominated in Sweden were: discussions around economic challenges; reaching consensus; discussions around pedagogical "investments" to ensure better results for pupils. In Denmark the top three items were: discussions around pedagogical "investments" to generate better results for pupils, discussions of development of school leaders' competencies, and strategic discussions about national decisions regarding education.

Discussion

The discussion that follows addresses four particular points of superintendent leadership in the Nordic countries, drawing on the theoretical framework presented and the findings reported above. The first issue addresses the power distribution between the state and the municipalities in national school governance across the Nordic countries. The underlying argument posits that these system characteristics are crucial in determining the context for municipal superintendent leadership in practice. Second, the municipalities' level of resources, and their capacity related to leadership for learning, will be discussed. Shifting to the individual level of analysis, third, the conceptual model of the superintendent is discussed in the light of empirical data from all Nordic countries. Finally, the chapter takes up to what extent leadership for learning is a relevant perspective for analyzing Nordic superintendent leadership in relation to the emerging data.

The Nordic Superintendent in the Educational Governance Line

As described in the previous sections, all Nordic school systems have been affected by comprehensive civil service reforms over the last two decades (Moos 2006). Decentralization of powers, authorities, and responsibilities from the state to the

municipalities have been a major trend in all Nordic countries (Kjellberg 1988; Montin and Amnå 2000), which in theory should lead to more degrees of freedom and scope for problem-solving and policy making at the local level. On the other hand, it has also been claimed that the state has shifted in mode of regulation toward more subtle and indirect steering instruments (Christensen and Lægreid 2001; Helgøy et al. 2007). Particularly in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, municipalities, schools, teachers, and pupils are subjected to external evaluation and assessment (Hudson 2007). Moreover, accountability is strengthened through making results from national tests and evaluations available on dedicated websites (Koritzinsky 2001), paired with the formation of central control agencies where the streams of reports, assessments, and performance data are assembled. A "mixed-mode" system of hard and soft governance in the relationship between central agencies and local agents is, thus, evident in the Nordic countries (Moos 2009). In theoretical terms, this means co-existence of loose and tight couplings (Meyer 2002; Rowan 2002) between the state and the municipalities.

This shift then contextualizes superintendent leadership in the "crossfire" between accountability, quality control and indirect steering from the state versus local government priorities. The present situation gives rise to the following question: Is the Nordic superintendent typically a quality control agent on behalf of the state – or a local leadership facilitator who acts on behalf of professional school interests? The duality embedded in the school governance context finds resonance in the reported data about the superintendents' individual role interpretation and priorities of leadership tasks. On one hand, the current study portrays a profession-oriented learning facilitator as the prototype of the Nordic superintendent. This image is manifest in content and priorities in the superintendents' regular meetings with their school principals. For example, the Swedish and Danish data portray frequent discussions around pedagogical "investments" in the service of better results for pupils, paired with discussions of development of school leaders' competencies. Norwegian data on dominant priorities in the leadership dialogue with school principals cohere around clarification of school vision for principals, conveying high expectations for staff and students and supporting school principals individually. On the other hand, more managerial issues such as economic challenges, financial planning, and implementation of strategic decision are also themes frequently reported as being discussed with school principals (Johansson 2010). Taken together, the dominant image of a self-preferred leadership style among Nordic superintendents is the one of a professional learning facilitator with focus on pupil-orientation.

Capacity and Resources Lead for Learning in Practice

A baseline assumption regards administrative capacity and pedagogical knowledge in the municipality's central office as critical for creating and sustaining learning communities (Björk and Gurley 2003). More specifically, it is assumed that a

minimum level of these critical human resources determines the superintendent's room for maneuver in facilitating collaborative learning, administrative support, and individual support for their principals. In this respect, Nordic surveys have investigated the number of co-workers in relation to the level of critical human resources. The data detailed here paint a rather diverse picture of the municipal capacity in that respect. For example in Norway, when 20% of the largest municipalities are excluded from the sample, the main picture that emerges is one of a small-scale administrative apparatus with only limited human resources, that is, one to three people, mirroring the diverse municipality structure in Norway. Although the data do not offer detailed insight into the various leadership challenges associated with the small-scale pattern, this factor emerges as a bottleneck and possible impediment to the superintendent's capacity to lead principals professionally. What is more, the Norwegian state's strong rhetoric[1] of municipal superintendents as potent agents for quality assurance and top-down reform implementation appear debatable when it comes to practical realities. This emphasizes the importance of understanding the character of context-dependent leadership as pointed to earlier in this paper. We need more research on both successful schools and underperforming schools, superintendents and their relation to different contextual factors.

The Nordic Superintendent: Conceptual Properties

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, research literature on Nordic superintendent leadership is sparse. Moreover, there is not a common conceptual definition of leadership roles. The current studies therefore aimed to clarify the conceptual properties of superintendent leadership, based on empirical data. In short, the empirical evidence confirms that the conceptual definition of a superintendent as previously detailed holds true, despite some cross-country variation. However, the data provide rich information that complements the definition. As discussed, the Nordic superintendent is a relatively high-ranking administrative manager in the municipal hierarchy. In Denmark, the superintendent is typically subordinate to a higher-ranked generalist manager, whereas in the other countries, the superintendent is directly subordinate to the municipality's CEO. When it comes to the jurisdiction and responsibility of the superintendent, the data confirm both similarities and differences. In all Nordic countries, the superintendent is responsible for primary schooling within the whole municipality. In Finland and Sweden, preschool, upper secondary and adult education can also be part of the superintendent's domain. Further, the superintendent is the superior of the school principal throughout the whole municipality. However, when the investigation extended its focus beyond the formal role-elements, toward leadership orientation and self-perception, two important complementarities become apparent. First, the data uniformly show that

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[1] See for example the 2005 Norwegian curriculum reform, called 'Knowledge Promotion' and the proceeding white paper A Culture for Learning.

the Nordic school superintendent sees himself or herself as a leading professional rather than a generalist public sector manager. Educational background, professional knowledge, and work experience exemplify someone with a typical educational background. What is more, the superintendent's career path is typically tied into the school sector – in many cases within the same municipality. These characteristics suggest a strong pattern of path-dependency to the generalist management templates (Sahlin-Andersson and Engwall 2002) that have dominated the debate in an era of New Public Management (Christensen et al. 2000). Second, the data point clearly to a view of the Nordic superintendent as a learning facilitator for school principals. The many items that measure role perception, priorities, and understanding of school leadership portray a school-oriented and collegiate orientation (Harris et al. 1995) that deviates from the generalist rhetoric of public management (Christensen and Lægreid 2002).

Although the analysis builds on self-reported data, the self-orientation toward school professionalism, collegiate and learning-oriented leadership and school purpose is clear. Is it then relevant to talk about a Nordic superintendent? The commonalities found in the data are a strong school professional orientation, typically an educationalist role interpretation and a learning-oriented and facilitating self-reported leadership style. A trend across many cases is "traditionalist" in reality, although "modernist" on the surface, for example, in terms of job title, the name given to the functional unit and so on. But there are also significant differences across Nordic countries, and many of these are related to variations in the state–municipality interface. And the data also show that within nation variation in capacity and resources are often a function of municipality size. It once again underscores the fact that context matters significantly when discussing superintendent leadership in practice. Taking these considerations into account, together with limitations in our data material, there are significant similarities that run through Nordic school systems.

Concluding Remarks

Is leadership for learning a relevant perspective for school superintendent leadership in Nordic countries? The study reported here gives rise to three arguments in that respect. First, the mainstream educational governance steering system in Nordic countries is, in most cases, a blend of indirect centralized steering paired with accountability and local autonomy. On the other axis of the governance model, there is also a mix of professional and political steering in the Nordic school systems. Taken together, there are several gaps and open spaces in the educational governance chain from state to the students' learning, which underscore the educational significance of leadership for learning at the municipal level. Second, except in the case of Denmark, the typical municipality structure in the Nordic countries is small-scale (Rose and Baldersheim 2005), again creating gaps between the state directorate and the individual school. Theoretically, some unit must fill this gap with consultancy,

supervision, critical competence in pedagogy, assistance in managerial routines, and human resource management. To fill some of these gaps, the municipal superintendent is uniquely positioned in the educational governance hierarchy (Johansson 2010). Finally, turning to the data, despite its limitations, the strong profession-orientation and facilitator emphasis that emerges from the self-reported data support these conclusions.

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Chapter 31
Successful Leadership for Improved Student Learning in High Needs Schools: U.S. Perspectives from the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP)

Stephen L. Jacobson and Lauri Johnson

Introduction and Overview

Since 2001, this chapter's co-authors have been members of a team of researchers from the Graduate School of Education at the University at Buffalo who developed the initial U.S. contribution to the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP); a project now comprising teams from 15 nations that examines the practices of principals and headmasters during whose tenure student academic and affective performance improved in their respective schools. That initial contribution was a study of three principals who turned around failing, high needs schools serving high poverty communities in Western New York (Jacobson et al. 2005a). The original three case studies eventually grew to seven (Giles et al. 2007) and, most recently, an examination of sustained success in Fraser, one of the original three schools studied (Jacobson et al. 2009).

Based upon our findings from these studies, in this chapter, we focus specifically on three elements of successful school leadership: (1) improving student performance in high needs schools, (2) building organizational capacity to sustain school success over time, and (3) developing leadership that is culturally responsive. The authors have previously addressed these issues individually and from a comparative perspective, having compared leadership practices in high need U.S. schools to challenging schools in Australia and England (Ylimaki et al. 2007); leadership for organizational capacity building and sustainability with schools in England and Sweden (Jacobson et al. 2009; Day et al. 2011); and culturally responsive leadership with schools in Norway and Cyprus (Johnson et al. 2008; Johnson et al. 2011). In this chapter, we address these same issues of leadership but focus primarily on those aspects that appear to be unique to the

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United States, considering how each affects student academic and affective achievement.

In order to place these issues in context, we first provide descriptions of two elements of American public education that give the system a unique cast. The first is structural, i.e., the governance and funding foundations of the U.S. system, while the second is compositional, i.e., the shifting demographics of our increasingly diverse population. Next we offer a brief overview of the ISSPP and how it has contributed to the literature on leadership for improved student performance. This is followed sequentially by our U.S.-centric focus on improving student performance in high needs schools, building organizational capacity to sustain school success over time, and developing leadership that is culturally responsive. We conclude with some observations about directions for future research and the significance of both site specific and comparative analyses.

Governance and Funding of Public Education in the United States

A distinctive feature of American public education is that it is highly decentralized in terms of both governance and funding. Since the Federal government can assume only those duties expressly granted to it by the U.S. Constitution – and since education is not one of them, responsibility for public education is reserved to the States. As a consequence, each of the fifty states (and the District of Columbia) should be viewed as an autonomous system with primary authority for the education of the school age population within its jurisdiction. Individual state education departments (SEDs) determine key educational policies such as subject-specific curricula standards, performance expectations for high school graduation, as well as the professional requirements necessary for the certification of school professionals, including teachers and administrators.

States further decentralize the public system by delegating considerable authority to local educational authorities (known in the United States as school districts), which in turn develop the local policies necessary to align with statutory mandates. There are roughly 13,500 school districts in the United States, ranging from almost 1,100 in Texas to 1 in Hawaii (the only state to function as a unitary system), and, collectively, these districts served over 56 million children from prekindergarten through grade 12 (*Source*: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2008).

At the local level, school districts have their own governing bodies (school boards) that are typically, but not always, elected by the local community. Decentralizing control to the local level is presumed to democratize and contextualize education by allowing school board members, as public representatives, to make (1) such key decisions as determining the level of local fiscal support, i.e., how much local constituents will have to be taxed to supplement federal and state contributions to achieve the community's educational objectives, and (2) human resource decisions such as rates of pay for educators and the hiring and firing of teachers,

administrators, and other personnel. In other words, while the most overarching educational policies are determined primarily at the state level, much of the fiscal and human resource support needed to address those policies is determined locally.

Mirroring this tripartite of federal, state, and local governance, funding for public elementary and secondary education in the United States is also relatively decentralized with only 7%, on average, of a school's fiscal support coming from the Federal government (including the Department of Education and other agencies, such as the Department of Health and Human Services' Head Start program and the Department of Agriculture's School Lunch program). The rest of a school's revenues comes from state and local sources, which are, on average, 48% and 45%, respectively.

Although Federal funding represents a relatively small share of public investment in education (less than one-sixth) when compared to the commitments made by the states and localities, the federal government wields a greater influence over educational policy than their monetary contribution might otherwise suggest. The "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) federal legislation of 2002 is an important case in point. Since its implementation all American schools are operating in a context of greater public scrutiny, with accountability based on standardized students' tests, than at any other time in recent history. NCLB requires annual proficiency tests in reading and math for all students in grades 3–8 and schools that do not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals repeatedly are subject to severe consequences and corrective action.

In New York, where we conducted our case studies, annual school report cards track student performance on required standardized tests. These card reports have become the focus of considerable attention and should a school consistently underperform, it is subject to sanctions, most notably being named a School Under Registration Review (SURR), which can lead to state takeover or dissolution. Receiving a SURR designation can stigmatize a school and its district, causing parents to reconsider where they choose to live and educate their children. Parents opting to leave or avoid a district can have a negative effect on a community's real property values, and since property taxes represent the most commonly used mechanism for funding schools at the local level, subsequent reductions in revenue only make it harder for these low performing schools to address their needs and thus they are particularly damaging to the educational opportunities of children who must remain in these high needs schools.

Moreover, this potential problem only exacerbates existing differences in local property wealth that have already led to marked disparities in the fiscal support and personnel resources available to some schools and school districts as compared to others, even among neighboring systems within the same state. The most extreme cases of these "savage inequalities" (Kozol 1991) can be found when comparing high need, high poverty, urban systems with their more affluent suburban neighbors. These fiscal disparities are extremely detrimental to schools trying to address the pressures of high stakes accountability and, because successful leadership in such challenging situations may be the most daunting task in American public education, the primary focus of the U.S. cases within the ISSPP has been on those principals who have led successful student improvement initiatives in high need, high poverty schools.

Changing Demographics in the United States

Although the United States has always been diverse, between 1923 and 1964 restrictive policies limited immigration, particularly from countries outside of Europe. In the last three decades, U.S. society has become increasingly multicultural and multilingual. The 1990s witnessed a rapid influx of immigrants and a recent survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are 11–12 million new immigrants and that almost two-thirds (64)% of all foreign-born residents arrived in the United States after 1980, most coming from non-English speaking Asian and Central and South American nations (Spring 2004). Another way to look at this level of diversity is to note that more than 20% of all children in the United States are either foreign-born or have a parent who was born abroad. Hispanics now represent the largest ethnic minority group in America (14.5%) and the Latino community is growing at an estimated 1.7 million people per year. The Census Bureau predicts that by 2050, 53% of the overall U.S. population will be Caucasian, 25% Hispanic, 14% African American, and 8% Asian.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, U.S. schools have never been more linguistically, culturally, religiously, ethnically, and racially diverse (Prewitt 2002). Students of color (i.e., Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, and Native American) make up 44% of the Nation's public school population. In some states, like California, and in the 20 largest urban school districts across the country, students of color constitute an overwhelming majority of the school population. Nationwide, almost one in five (18.4%) school-age youth speak a language other than English at home. In some urban school districts, over 100 different languages are spoken.

Increasing demographic diversity in the United States is occurring within a political and social context of high accountability, resegregation, and the fiscal inequities between urban and suburban school districts noted earlier (see, e.g., Kozol 2005; Rebell 2005, Orfield et al. 2002). In 2006, roughly three-in-ten Hispanic and Black students attended schools that were nearly all minority. Poor urban schools must raise test scores on state-mandated assessments with fewer resources than their more affluent suburban neighbours or face reorganization, replacement of staff, or designation as a charter school.

Further exacerbating the problem of underperforming urban schools is the fact that these schools are increasingly contending with students living in poverty. The Condition of Education 2002 (NCES 2002) reported that 29% of all central city children age 5–17 years old lived in households where the annual income was below the poverty level; a figure Frankenburg et al. (2003) contend underestimates the problem. As a point of reference, the three urban schools that comprised our initial case study sites were dealing with much higher rates of poverty, with over 80% of their students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. In other words, these were rather extreme but, unfortunately, not unusual cases; schools in which improving student performance was a considerable leadership challenge.

The ISSPP

The ISSPP began in 2001 as an eight-nation study of the practices of principals who had successfully improved the academic performance of students in their schools, with the team from the United States being the only one to focus exclusively on high poverty schools. When placed within the tradition of research on the factors that influence student academic achievement (Jacobson and Bezzina 2008), the ISSPP links the emphasis on student outcomes found in the effective schools literature (e.g., Brookover and Lezotte 1979) to issues of process found in the school improvement literature (e.g., Hopkins 1987). From the Effective Schools we took away a very simple premise,

> A school leader's effectiveness is based on how well students achieve. As long as student performance meets or exceeds expectations, school leaders are presumed to be doing their jobs well. (Duke 1987, p. 23)

This first premise led us to the identification of our study sites because we selected only high needs schools that had experienced an increase in student achievement scores subsequent to the arrival of a new principal. High need designation was determined by New York State as the ratio of the percentage of students in a school receiving free or reduced fee lunch plus the percentage with Limited English Proficiency divided by the revenues available to the school. The higher the ratio, the greater the need, and for our cases, we selected only those schools in the top quartile.

To this, we add three important perspectives central to the contributions of the School Improvement literature,

> The studies highlighted the limitations of externally imposed changes, the importance of focusing on the school as the unit of change, and the need to take the change process seriously. (Hopkins 1987, p. 29)

In so doing, we focused on the actions (values and practices) of the principal within a specific school and the subsequent actions of teachers, aides, parents, and the students themselves. Combined, the ISSPP focused specifically on the practices of principals who had successfully improved student performance and then expanded this inquiry transnationally by addressing the following questions:

1. What practices do successful principals use?
2. Do these practices vary across national contexts?
3. Under what conditions are the effects of such practices heightened or diminished?
4. What variables link principal's leadership to student achievement?

As a conceptual frame, we used the work of Leithwood and Riehl (2005), who note that successful school leadership refers to "leadership orientations and practices that have been demonstrated to have a positive impact on student learning, whether directly or indirectly through school conditions or the actions of others" (pp. 14–15). Their review of the extant research revealed that successful school leadership makes important contributions to the improvement of student learning and that a core set of leadership practices exist in almost all contexts. These practices include setting

directions, developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing the instructional program.

The initial set of 65 case studies developed by the ISSPP supported the existence of these practices across nations, but also found that principals adapted these practices to their specific contexts in order to achieve the desired effects. In the United States, for example, principals' direction setting was relatively short term, driven by the necessity to meet NCLB annual achievement gains (Jacobson et al. 2005b). This short time frame came into very clear focus when compared to the directions set by successful Australian principals who tended to focus on learning over a lifetime (Gurr et al. 2005). And then, in contrast to the type of academic achievement-oriented direction setting found in the United States, it was seen that principals in Norway (Møller et al. 2005), Denmark (Moos et al. 2005), and Sweden (Hoog et al. 2005) focused far more on the development of democratic values. In other words, direction setting was found in every case of successful principal leadership, but the actual directions set were context-specific and sensitive to policies and/or values prominent in that principal's respective nation.

Improving Student Performance in High Need U.S. Schools

The principals we studied in our initial U.S. cases also exhibited the core skills that Leithwood and Riehl (2005) contend are necessary for school success. Each set a clear direction that encouraged a sense of common purpose. Their missions were explicit, making the needs of children paramount and making sure that everyone worked together to improve the life chances of their students. They made it obvious that all school decisions and practices were for the good of children and improving their learning.

Because all three schools were located in neighborhoods dealing with high levels of crime, drug abuse, and gang-related violence, the first step each principal took was to make sure that their students and teachers felt physically safe and emotionally cared for in a secure, nurturing school environment, i.e., they redesigned their organizations. This required securing the building by limiting access to the school and screening visitors. It meant careful scrutiny of who should have access to classrooms and when it was appropriate for someone to enter, that it was done in a manner that would not disrupt instruction. These security initiatives were coupled with efforts to make the school more inviting to children and adults alike. Thus, while doors were being locked, the school was actually more open than in the past, so long as your purpose for being there was in the best interest of children. Creating a safe, nurturing, child-centered environment was a necessary, but insufficient, step in improving student performance in these high poverty schools. In other words, this organizational redesign was required before the principals could successfully manage their instructional programs; a finding supported by Harris and Chapman's (2002) contention that upgrading the learning environment at the initial stages of a school improvement initiative is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of

other important strategies. While similar issues of physical security confronted a few schools in England and Australia, the level of concern seemed more immediate in the high poverty American schools we studied.

Another common strategy these principals employed was to become a visible presence around the school, especially during arrival and dismissal. This was an important symbolic gesture to reestablish control and cohesion in schools that had lost their way, in communities that could be dangerous. The principals made their presence felt in the schools' hallways, classrooms, auditoriums, lunchrooms, and gyms. This was not intended to intimidate or coerce, but to reassure teachers that student indiscipline would not be tolerated and reassure students that they would be treated with respect and kindness.

We heard repeatedly in our interviews that the principal's role modeling was the most defining aspect in their commitment to following her lead. Her commitment became their commitment, her expectations became their expectations, and her mission and direction became theirs as well. But to accomplish these goals, the principals understood that children and adults have to believe the goals being set for them are attainable and that they will be provided the resources and training needed to be successful, i.e., these principals worked at developing their people. If people are expected to improve their performance, they need opportunities to build their intellectual and experiential capacity if they are to succeed. The principals used whatever fiscal and material resources were available to promote professional development. There were times when the principals' commitment and persistence was tested. Often tough decisions had to be made and teachers were "encouraged" to transfer when the principal felt they were no longer working in service to the school's mission.

One final point about these principals, they each brought a passion for the socially just and equitable education of the children and the communities they served – a characteristic we also found among principals in several high needs schools in England and Australia (Ylimaki et al. 2007). Each American principal studied knowingly assumed the leadership of an underperforming school in a high poverty area, recognizing well the barriers to learning that poverty can produce. Yet none would allow those conditions to be used as an excuse for low expectations or poor performance. They worked hard to involve parents and other community members because they believed that reconnecting a school to its community is central to school improvement efforts. Their enthusiasm was accompanied by persistence and optimism, and in the high accountability contexts they were confronting, they used external demands of state mandated testing as a tool for overcoming resistance to change on the part of those teachers who questioned the innate academic abilities of their students.

Building Organizational Capacity and Sustainability

As part of the ongoing activity of the ISSPP, it was decided in 2007 that the national teams should go back to revisit those sites first studied in 2001–2002 that had continued to show improvement in student performance. The idea behind this phase of

the project was that the first visit had provided a valuable snapshot of school success, but if continued improvement in student achievement could not be sustained, then perhaps we needed to reconsider what we meant by success.

When it came time to revisit the schools, of the seven principals we originally studied (Giles et al. 2007), four had retired, one had moved to central office, and only one of the remaining two had managed to sustain success over time at the same school, Fraser Academy. When we first studied Fraser in 2001–2002, we reported the remarkable turnaround of a once-failing, high poverty, urban school that coincided with the formation of a bank partnership and the arrival of an exemplary principal who came to the school in 1994 (Jacobson et al. 2007). Our subsequent examination of Fraser's student achievement scores revealed that the school – now Fraser Community Charter School (FCCC) – had managed to sustain success through 2007–2008, when we collected our second round of data. Although it is hard to make inferences from a single case study, the governance issues that the school had to address in order to sustain success have a uniquely American character to them and therefore it seems worthy of discussion.

Using the same conceptual lens employed during the first report, it was clear that FCCS's principal has maintained the clear sense of purpose and direction she brought to the school when she arrived, and that the school remains the safe, nurturing learning environment we witnessed in 2002. She continues to hold everyone to high expectations, which continue to yield solid and improving student performance, even in the face of eroding economic conditions in the district. But to accomplish this, Fraser had to be further redesigned organizationally in order to protect its most valuable asset, a faculty in whom it had made considerable professional development investments. Sustaining school improvements long term at Fraser depended on the self-renewing capacity of the teaching force and was eventually accomplished through a combination of careful selection and hiring, supportive socialization, and ongoing professional development offered by veteran colleagues and professional consultants. In order to put these self-renewal processes in place, Fraser had to first become a conversion charter school, i.e., a public school granted a charter by the state that frees it from key district constraints, most notably in this case the ability to make its own human resource allocation decisions. The ability to make ongoing investments in building the capacity of its faculty without fear of district-wide personnel policies that might have otherwise led to cuts and transfers is what ultimately sustained FCCS's direction and success. But to better understand why this was the case, we need to briefly revisit the U.S. governance context addressed earlier.

Under NCLB legislation, parents can opt to educate their children elsewhere when a public school or district continuously underperforms. As previously noted, because the levy of a property tax represents the most commonly used mechanism to finance schools at the local level, parents moving to other districts can erode funding for such underperforming schools. A loss of funding can have a deleterious effect on human resource allocations, because teacher contracts in New York are negotiated at the local level. This relationship between funding and teacher

resources is central to the changes made at FCCC. When we first visited Fraser, it was a traditional public school in one of New York's largest and poorest urban school districts. Funding and human resource decisions, such as hiring, firing, and transfers, were handled by the district's central office in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement it has with its teacher union. Markedly declining enrolments, due in part to poor student performance and newly enacted State legislation allowing for charter schools; coupled with a very weak local economy, led to severe budgetary constraints that threatened district-wide teacher layoffs. Even though Fraser had gone from being one of the very worst to one of the very best schools in the district, teacher seniority, not the quality of teacher performance, would determine who got laid off and how transfers would be determined. "Last hired – first fired" rules applied, and where opportunities arose, veteran teachers from any school in the district could "bump" junior teachers from Fraser, regardless of how productive those junior teachers might have been or how much the principal wanted to retain them.

Having seniority, rather than performance, determine which teachers would go, which would stay and which could transfer into the school was an option that Fraser's leadership found problematic in light of the school's investments in their teachers' professional development. Therefore, discussions began about making Fraser a conversion charter school in which an existing public school remains in the same building; keeps as many teachers, with the same union representation, as want to stay; keeps its same students; and perhaps most importantly, gains greater autonomy from district regulations.[1]

To complete this transition, both the District and State Board of Education authorizers require a majority of parents to vote in support. The subsequent election produced a turnout of over 80% of Fraser's parents (student enrollment was just over 600) and almost 100% of those voting supported the conversion to charter.

Becoming a conversion charter provided FCCS with greater fiscal autonomy and human resource flexibility. Fiscal autonomy meant that funding would come from the State through the district and then FCCS would control the whole of its allocation, allowing for far greater discretion on spending for professional development. Human resource flexibility meant that FCSS did not have to deal with seniority "bumping" rights or hiring constraints, such as the district's residency requirement – FCCS could recruit anywhere. Becoming a charter also meant that teachers choosing to stay at FCCS are not eligible for tenure, operating instead under renewable multiyear contracts.

Since conversion to charter in 2004, 27 of 41 teachers (66%) who were then at Fraser have left. These departures became the school's greatest challenge and the main catalyst for its subsequent self-renewal as the principal and those veteran

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[1]Details about New York Education Law Article 56: The Charter Schools Act can be found at: http://www.nycsa.org/Legislation/CSLaws/CS%20law.pdf.

teachers who remained recognized that new teachers had to be brought up to speed quickly in order to meet the school's objectives. As one veteran teacher told us

> There was no time for new teachers to hang back and watch. We needed the new staff members to get on board quickly, which meant we needed to work together and do peer coaching in classrooms.

The reading specialist described these job embedded professional development efforts as "scaffolding and supporting teachers in their classrooms, helping them get the program in place and figuring out where to target their efforts." Grade level teams began meeting regularly, at which a teacher modeled a lesson and then the rest of the team critiqued what they saw, focusing on what worked and what needed improvement.

While veteran teachers acknowledged the pressure of having to sustain the school's success, they also felt empowered by their new leadership roles and took even greater ownership in the school and its programs. As one veteran noted, "It was hard in some ways, but I have to say I felt really good about taking a leadership role in keeping the program moving forward in spite of all the staff changes." In fact, teacher leadership has become institutionalized over the past 5 years with the formation of a school-wide leadership team represented by one teacher from each grade level that meets at least twice a month to coordinate FCCS's staff development activities.

The principal assisted this self-renewal initiative by creating explicit curriculum maps for each grade level. These maps provided new teachers with clear guidelines about the skills and strategies they would need to help their students meet state standards in time for the assessments. Veteran and new teachers alike commented about how much they learned from the development and implementation of the curriculum maps and how these maps helped to keep them on target. So, in addition to modeling instruction and peer coaching, discussions at grade level meetings now included a focus on how these maps could help the school meet its targets across all grades.

These efforts at sustaining improved levels of student performance proved so successful that, by 2008, FCCS was designated a model site by the developers of the balanced literacy program the school uses. This designation means that teachers from other schools are brought to FCCC to observe the excellent quality of instruction at this once-failing school.

While the principal remains the central figure in FCCS's sustained success and the lead standard-bearer for maintaining the school's direction, the significant organizational redesign that has accompanied the conversion to being a charter school helped to allay community concerns about continued long-term success, even beyond the principal's eventual retirement. With structures for teacher self-renewal in place and strengthening, particularly through on-site collegial professional development led by teachers themselves, we hope to continue this longitudinal study by returning to FCCS after the principal is no longer at the helm, to see if this school's evolution continues.

Culturally Responsive Leadership

Culturally responsive leadership practices are defined in this chapter as those that incorporate the history, values, and cultural knowledge of students' home communities in the school curriculum, work to develop a critical consciousness among both students and faculty to challenge inequities in the larger society, and empower parents from diverse communities. Ladson-Billings coined the term "culturally relevant pedagogy" in *The Dreamkeepers* (1994), her now classic study of eight exemplary teachers of African American students. In Ladson-Billings' (1995a, b) view, culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three propositions: (a) students must experience academic success, (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the social order.

While much of the research on culturally responsive practices has been applied to classroom teaching, recent efforts have attempted to apply a culturally responsive framework to school leadership. These studies have identified culturally responsive principals as those who emphasize high expectations for student academic achievement, exhibit an ethic of care or "empowerment through care," and maintain a commitment and connection to the larger community (e.g., Reitzug and Patterson 1998; Scheurich 1998; Johnson 2006). In her review of the literature on the principal's role in creating inclusive schools, Riehl (2000) also identifies three tasks that determine whether administrators are prepared to respond to diversity and demonstrate multicultural leadership. These include fostering new definitions of diversity; promoting inclusive instructional practices within schools by supporting, facilitating, or being a catalyst for change; and building connections between schools and communities.

Three of the U.S. ISSPP case study schools were analyzed for culturally responsive leadership practices with a particular focus on home–school relationships (Johnson 2007). Each of these women principals, two African American and one White, worked to create a trusting environment in their school where parents and community members could feel welcome and comfortable. At Fraser the newly appointed African American principal transformed the school's relationship with parents through an ethic of care and the use of "open door" strategies. In this school, the discourse of "care" could be described as empowering, for the principal made hiring a diverse faculty a priority. These new teachers, along with the principal, identified with parents and held high expectations for student achievement. At Colman Elementary, a predominately white middle class school with changing demographics, the principal emphasized a sense of belonging and the importance of personal connection with parents. Because racially diverse Costello Elementary had a previous reputation for low student achievement and inconsistent student discipline, the new African American principal's goal was to create a safe and nurturing child-centered learning environment that focused on addressing students' basic social and emotional needs. As one of the parents put it:

> You see (the principal) telling children "You're important. We're glad you're here." … all the children feel that this school is for them, that they are important here.

All three U.S. principals held high expectations for student achievement. For the two African American women leaders, this "no excuses" approach maps onto a long historical tradition of high expectations for African American students within the Black community and Black women leaders who are often viewed as community "othermothers" to the children in their schools (Collins 1991). The White principal's approach regarding inclusiveness in home–school relationships seemed related to her moral stance to "serve children and families first." Yet there was limited evidence from data collected about the instructional programs in the three schools that these leaders incorporated students' home cultures or community "funds of knowledge" (Moll 1992) in the day-to-day curriculum of their schools. Fraser Elementary came closest to this approach, with multicultural assemblies, occasional staff development workshops for teachers, and multicultural literature prevalent in the school library.

The leaders of these three schools represent a continuum of efforts to include culturally diverse parents and community members in the life of the school, with Fraser being the most inclusive and Costello being the least inclusive. Faced with safety issues in the surrounding neighborhood at Fraser Elementary, the principal brought together parents, teachers, and the block club to form an "action group" to pressure city officials and established a "parent patrol" to disrupt the drug dealing in the city park near the school. By modeling agency, Fraser's principal enabled parents to become successful advocates and lobbyists in accessing and mobilizing community resources needed for their neighborhood. In their words, "from the beginning she's (the principal) included the parents in every decision that's being made around here."

Although Colman's principal initiated workshops for parents and enlisted them as full members of the site-based decision-making team, it is the personal relationships and her advocacy for parents that have made the difference in school–community relationships. As one of the parents described her approach:

> She will listen to you as a parent… she will speak to the teachers on your behalf and get you the support you need. She will get you the help you need, and that's something that's been helpful, kind of a go-between between parents (and teachers).

At Costello Elementary, recognizing that her hard-hitting style could be intimidating to some of the parents, the principal hired a parent liaison and utilized the guidance counselor in the school to help enlist parents as volunteers and coordinate parent workshops. But there is little evidence that parents were involved in decision making in this school.

In the face of high stakes testing and accountability mandates in U.S. schools, this analysis of the ISSPP case study data through a culturally responsive lens raises questions about how successful principals in culturally diverse schools might maintain high standards for student success and upward mobility without producing a narrow and standardized curriculum (see, e.g., Sleeter 2006). Our case studies demonstrate that leadership practices which aim to both increase student achievement and empower diverse stakeholders can create tensions for culturally diverse schools. Is success about increasing student achievement in the mainstream curriculum?

Or should we also consider how schools provide learning experiences that "center" students in the history and culture of their families and home communities and provide all students in the school with a multicultural curriculum? Is the leadership aim to integrate immigrant students and parents into the cultural and linguistic mainstream with the hope of greater social mobility in society? Or do successful school leaders also find ways to challenge inequities in the school district and larger society? Finding a balance between honoring student home cultures and emphasizing student learning in a high accountability context does not easily lend itself to normative models and quick fixes.

Conclusions

Since its inception, the ISSPP has produced more than seventy case studies across numerous national contexts, making it one of the largest international studies of successful school leadership ever undertaken. Yet, typical of qualitative research, findings from these cases are primarily descriptive and informative, therefore transference to other contexts must be undertaken with caution. Nevertheless, the scope and sheer quantitative breadth of the ISSPP case study research has gone some way in overcoming this weakness and, as Leithwood (2005) concluded, it has produced, "progress on a broken front." He noted that collectively these national reports support the existence of a core set of leadership practices that are necessary for improved student achievement in almost any context, though insufficient by themselves. Furthermore, the cases add to the literature on successful school leadership by helping to identify both the isomorphic and idiosyncratic characteristics of leadership across diverse contexts.

Our analyses of differences across national contexts underscore the role of varying ideological orientations and policy contexts in the day-to-day practice of successful school principals. Cross-national comparisons remind us that theory and practice in educational leadership and management is socially constructed and contextually bound and therefore successful leaders must be sensitive to their local and national contexts. In the high accountability context that is now American public education, student performance on standardized tests has become the main if not the only criteria used to measure school success. This focus on test scores, coupled with the Nation's decentralized approach to governance and funding, means that schools serving high poverty communities are under tremendous pressure to improve student performance or run the risk of seeing their scarce resources eroded still further. Principals in schools that consistently fail to meet their academic yearly progress expectations face the threat of job loss or having their school closed. In a recent example of the far-reaching effects of these accountability measures, Louisiana uses student test scores to evaluate teachers and the institutions that train them. The current U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan calls this state's approach a "model for the nation" and other states such as Florida and Texas are considering following suit (*Washington Post*, Dec. 13, 2009).

Nevertheless, our case studies in the United States revealed principals serving high poverty populations who have managed to take their respective schools in a positive direction over the course of their tenure. Creating a safe, learner-centered environment; setting clear directions that include high expectations for student achievement and faculty performance; providing the time and opportunity for people to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet those expectations; redesigning the organization to remove obstacles and create structures that permit self-renewal and sustained success; and developing connections with the broader community and honoring the diversity it encompasses were some of the strategies we saw utilized in high need U.S. schools, in some schools more successfully than others.

Our original analysis of successful leadership in challenging, high poverty schools provides support for the notion that high accountability measures, such as state curriculum standards and high stakes testing, can be leveraged by creative principals to focus instruction and professional development in order to improve student achievement in struggling schools (see, e.g., Giles et al. 2005). These accountability measures, however, may have also constrained instructional leadership and inadvertently restricted some of the curriculum priorities and parent involvement opportunities provided (Ylimaki 2007; Johnson 2007). When high poverty, challenging schools must focus primarily on raising standardized test scores in the U.S. current accountability-driven policy context (e.g., NCLB), there is little official district and state support for principals to incorporate "funds of knowledge" from local communities or multicultural curriculum, particularly if that knowledge base is not reflected on state assessments. Gardiner and Enomoto (2006), in their analysis of the practices of six urban principals in high need, diverse elementary schools using Riehl's (2000) framework, also found that incorporating inclusive instructional practices and multicultural curriculum was the least evident in these principals' practices as multicultural leaders. Under the mandates of NCLB, curriculum alignment to state assessments may be considered good instructional practice and multicultural education relegated to marginal status (see also Gardiner et al. 2009).

While our site-specific study of high needs U.S. schools helped tease out the dynamics of organizational structure and cultural responsiveness on student learning, the international and comparative nature of the larger ISSPP project has challenged the U.S. research team to consider other notions of "success" beyond academic achievement. In the ISSPP case studies in Norway and the other Scandinavian countries, for instance, the accountability issue did not involve high-stakes exams and education for democratic citizenship was placed in the forefront of the school curriculum. Perhaps reflecting their social democratic political orientation, successful school leadership in a Scandinavian context was almost entirely characterized by collaboration and team efforts, what the Norwegian research team has characterized as "team on top" (Møller et al. 2005). As we begin to consider how accountability issues and student learning are approached in high needs schools in non-Western countries (ISSPP research teams have recently started up in Mexico, Turkey, and South Africa, for instance), these cross national analyses can help us move beyond

our heavily Westernized educational leadership research base and expand our thinking about how differing cultural, political, and religious values might drive student learning outcomes and views of school leadership. We believe that further investigation of what is different about successful school leadership across a variety of cultural and national contexts will enrich the current research base in educational leadership for improved student learning.

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Chapter 32
Improving and Supporting Principals' Leadership in Latin America

Denise Vaillant

Introduction

Fostering school leadership has become a priority for education policy makers all around the world. Numerous studies have shown that it is necessary to take into account the current role of school leaders in education.[1] Principals today are faced with the challenge of rethinking their leadership in schools in order to encourage positive pedagogical contexts which promote student learning. What is the situation in Latin America regarding the pedagogical leadership of school principals? This question of great relevance drives the thread of this chapter.

Latin America has inherited educational debts from the twentieth century which must be adequately settled: universal coverage for children in school age, inclusion of marginal populations positioned outside the schooling system, improvement of education quality, strengthening the teaching career, and greater empowerment for schools. On the other hand, education in Latin America must make the leap into the twenty-first century and undertake new tasks which are pivotal for encouraging economic growth, social cohesion and cultural integration, access to new technologies and civic education. Both agendas, the one inherited from the twentieth century and the new one of the twenty-first century, are extremely demanding and require a great effort on various fronts and on the part of various actors. In this endeavor, the role of teachers is pivotal to helping children develop the required skills needed for success in the society of today and tomorrow (Vaillant 2005).

Furthermore, in the last decades, the specialization of the labor force has multiplied the responsibilities that fall on the education system. Certain occupations require increasingly higher levels of education or training, thereby increasing

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[1] See for example the project "Improving school leadership" carried out by OCDE in many countries between 2006 and 2008, available in its institutional page: www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership.

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the existing gap between those with low and high levels of education. More and more, activities require individuals to be able to read and understand technical information, while something similar can be seen with the demand for computer literacy. Nowadays, young people need to be trained for unpredictable and unstable career paths, with high levels of turnover, not only among positions within a sector, but also among types of occupation and economic sectors.

Improving the quality of teaching and learning continues to be the main objective of education. Another pressing objective is to guarantee that quality education reaches all students alike, in order to ensure greater educational equity. Unfortunately, these objectives and tasks, which any education system should strive to develop, carry with them multiple dilemmas and contradictions. If both society and children have changed, then it follows that the traditional ways of teaching are no longer valid. Paradoxically, in a time when the spaces to learn and the systems for accessing information have expanded, and the possibilities of exchange and communication and the number of students have increased, the educational goals, the organization of schools and the position of teachers still remain practically unaltered.

During the last decades, Latin American nations implemented a vast range of policies and education reforms. Even though similar guidelines can be traced across cases, the relative success of the changes undertaken and the general quality of the policies implemented vary greatly. This is the conclusion to which Grindle (2004) arrives in an analysis of the experiences of Mexico, Nicaragua, Ecuador and the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. The author highlights that, even though some of the countries in the region have made substantial gains, the results have been ambiguous and they lead to questions about some of the policy options adopted. The efforts employed have been unable to ensure sustainable education development in the Latin American countries.

Grade repetition and school dropout continue to be among the most urgent problems in the region. Persistent inequalities in the distribution of educational opportunities and low academic performance are two additional problems which education authorities must confront. In several countries, over 20% of students entering primary school do not make it to the 5th grade; the repetition rates for this stage are higher than 8% in most cases, reaching 19% in extreme cases such as Brazil (UNESCO 2010). Much has been said and written about the adverse effects of school repetition on students, such as successive failures in later years and early drop-out from schools. It also implies considerable costs for the education systems.

At the institutional level, we need to move toward modern and efficient forms of management and administration. In many Latin American countries, there is excessive centralism and lack of autonomy among principals and teachers when performing their tasks. This contrasts with what Vegas and Petrow (2008) consider to be high correlates of student performance: higher levels of school autonomy in personnel management and decision-making processes. However, these authors also argue that the mere fact of decentralization does not automatically provide schools and local managers with the required support and resources needed to provide effective learning climates.

An X-ray of School Principals

International research has shown that the leadership of school principals is crucial for improving the quality of education. Studies indicate that it is possible to detect certain common characteristics and basic practices among principals with good performance (Vegas and Petrow 2008). Research points in the same direction: that teachers are vital for improving educational outcomes; and that in turn school principals are vital for teachers to work better (Vaillant 2009).

Despite the importance of school heads for education in Latin America, their role has been relatively neglected. There is little research that adequately identifies the main characteristics of school principals in the region. What are their working conditions like? What kind of training do they receive? How is their performance assessed and evaluated? These are some of the main questions we should ask ourselves when describing the main characteristics of the leadership teams in schools.

Demographic Characteristics of School Principals

Available research on primary school principals in six countries in the region tells us that they are mostly middle-aged adults (see Table 32.1) with an average age between 40 and 50 (UNESCO 2008).

In some countries, such as Uruguay and Chile, the average age of principals is closer to, and sometimes exceeds, 50 years of age. Consistent with teaching careers that reward years of experience for promotion purposes, school heads and supervisors are usually recruited from among teachers. Transition from teacher to principal is a path chosen by many teachers in order to achieve higher pay and recognition (Morduchowicz 2003; Vaillant and Rossel 2006). On the other hand, compared to some OECD countries,[2] Latin American school heads are relatively young in age.

Table 32.1 Average age of teachers and school principals in primary schools

	Teachers	Principals
Argentina	41.0	49.4
Brazil	26.4	42.5
Chile	41.3	53.9
Paraguay	34.4	40.3
Peru	38.0	46.3
Uruguay	41.8	49.4

Source: Based on the data provided by UNESCO (2008) and Liang (2003); Data from teachers in Argentina, is based on 2004 National Census of Teachers

Note: The data corresponding to teachers is from 2002 and the one for principals to 2007

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[2] Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

In countries like Holland, Denmark and Belgium over 70% of principals are over 50 (OECD 2008).

Available data show that, even though women constitute the absolute majority of both teachers and school principals, the proportion of men in leadership positions is higher when compared to the proportion of men in teaching. In relative terms more men are found in headship positions than in teaching positions. Or, in other words, school leadership positions are more associated with male presence than those of classroom teaching (see Fig. 32.1).

As shown in the above figure, in some cases the difference in recruitment across gender lines is striking. For example, in Chile the proportion of women principals in primary education was 51%, while 85.8% of the teaching force was female. In other countries, the gap is less prominent. This suggests that access to leadership positions in schools operates as an "inverse corrector" of the well-known gender bias which exists in teacher recruitment (UNESCO 2008).

Training

Another important dimension to take into account is the type of *formal training* that school principals have undergone in Latin American countries. Evidence shows a remarkable predominance of principals with tertiary degrees. However, in Argentina
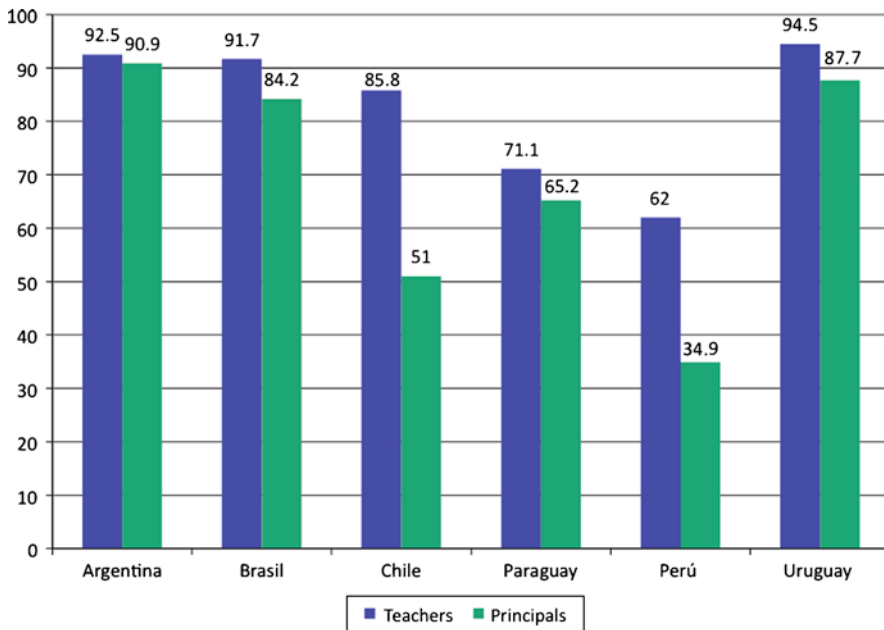
Fig. 32.1 Percentage of female teachers and school principals in primary schools for the year 2008, in selected countries of Latin America (*Source*: Developed by author, based on UNESCO (2008))
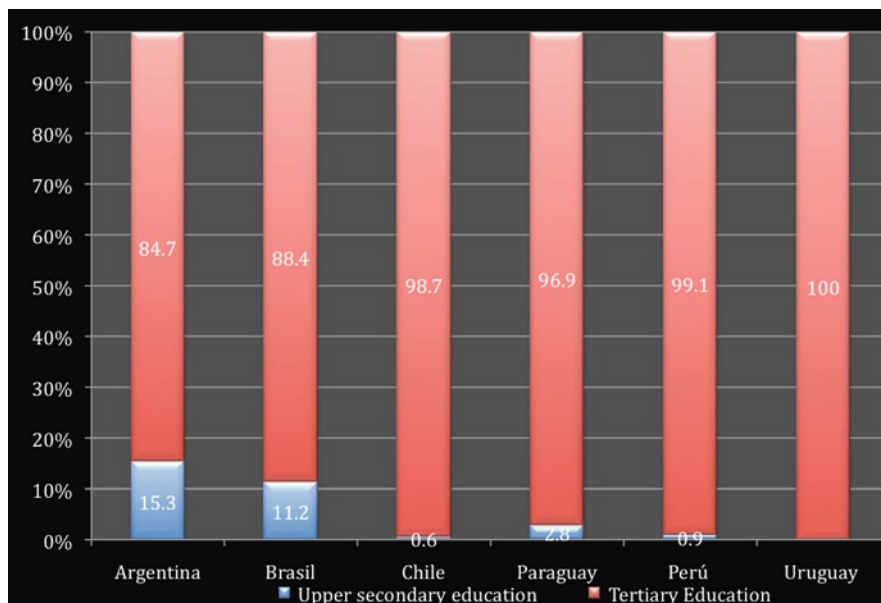
Fig. 32.2 Educational level obtained by principals of primary school in the year 2008, in selected countries of Latin America (*Source*: Developed by author based on UNESCO (2008))

and Brazil, the percentage of principals with only upper secondary education, or other post-secondary education,[3] is significantly higher. In Argentina, it accounts for up to 15.3% of school principals while in Brazil it is up to 11.2% (see Fig. 32.2).

What the aforementioned research also shows is a relatively high proportion of primary school principals with some *form of specific training* in school management and administration. In Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay over 80% of principals have received some form of management training, while Fig. 32.3 shows that in countries like Brazil and Paraguay the figure is somewhat lower (almost 70% in the first case and 60% in the latter).

However, information about the number of heads of schools with some form of management training says very little about the length and the quality of such training. There is a considerable variability among countries in this regard. Chile stands out as the country in which school principals have had more training opportunities, adding up to an average of 320 days. The countries which follow are Argentina (with an average of 135 days) and Paraguay (with an average of 116 days).

In Uruguay, Peru, and Brazil, the number of days of specific training received by principals is significantly lower and patently insufficient. In Uruguay, the average is only 92 days, in Peru 75 days and in Brazil it is only 27 days (see Fig. 32.4).

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[3] Refers to training that is undertaken after high school which may be conducive to a degree or simply be professional training.
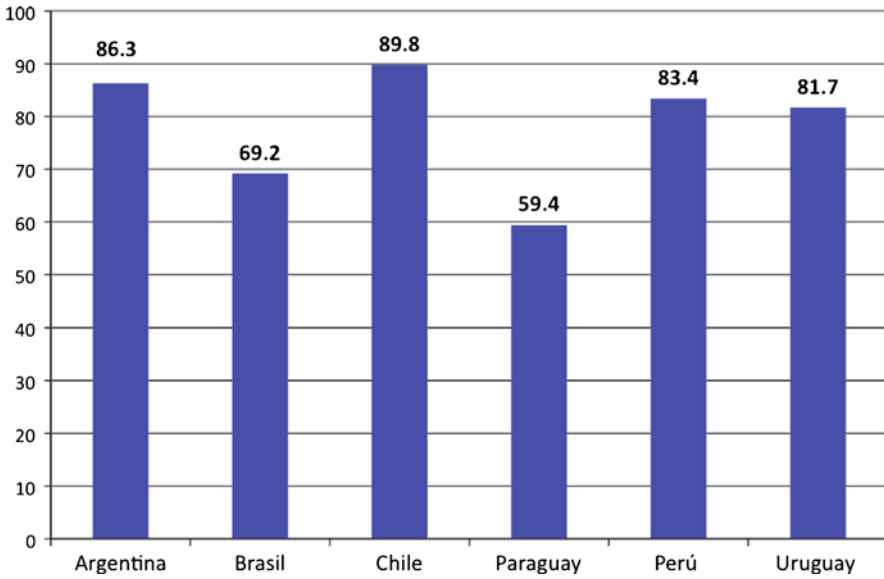
Fig. 32.3 Percentage of primary school principals who received specific training in management and administration for the year 2008, in the selected countries (*Source*: UNESCO (2008))
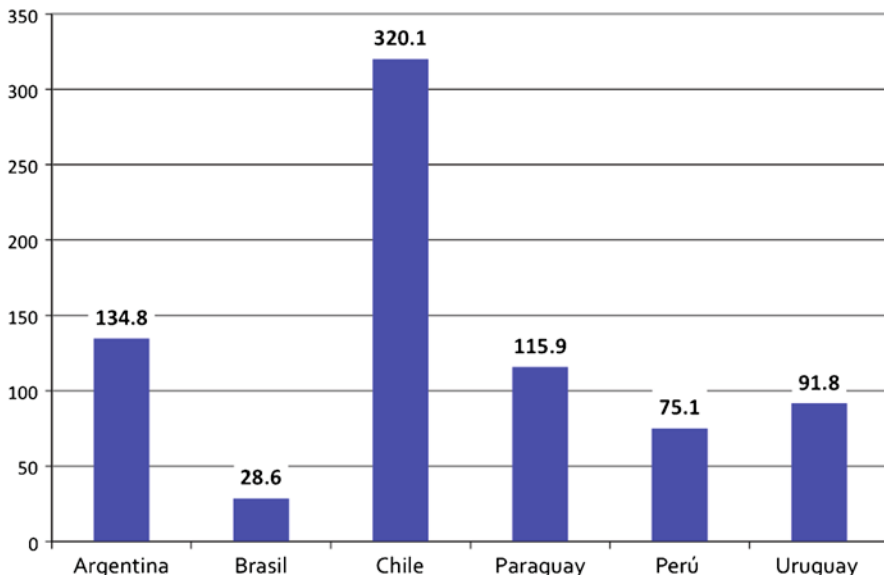
Fig. 32.4 Average number of days of specific training on management and administration, received by primary school principals in the selected countries (*Source*: UNESCO (2008))

Pedagogical Responsibilities

Many authors and policy makers have emphasized the important role played by heads of schools in the support of teachers and the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning within their schools. However, as Table 32.2 shows, in Latin America as elsewhere in the world, school principals must spend a large *percentage of their time* on administrative tasks, causing them to neglect other more pedagogical ones (OECD 2009). These merely administrative activities (such as accounting, infrastructure supervision, etc.) tend to be ubiquitous, while other more pedagogical activities (such as monitoring and assessment of learning progress, coordination of courses, and extracurricular activities) are less frequent.

The current situation is of concern if we observe the relatively low percentage of principals who carry out tasks specifically destined to support teaching and learning. Even though classroom observations and teacher support activities represent an important part of the total number of tasks undertaken by principals, the amount of time afforded to management and administrative tasks is always higher than the one given to educational and pedagogical leadership. The discussion of issues such as methods of class instruction, student assessment, and the appropriateness of textbooks occupies a minor part of the total workload of principals in the Latin American region.

Autonomy

International research suggests that school principals show higher levels of satisfaction with their work when they are given a certain degree of autonomy (Guarino et al. 2004). Evidence seems to suggest that greater levels of principal autonomy in schools is positively correlated with greater learning outcomes (OECD 2007). Though some Latin American countries are progressively moving toward this model – which is predominant in countries of the OECD – the prevailing trend in the region is still for school principals to be excluded from key decision-making processes involving aspects of school management (PREAL 2006).

As shown in Table 32.3, in most countries, issues such as the hiring and the promotion of teachers, decisions concerning budget spending and even curricular decisions, are still mostly made at the national or state level. There are very few exceptions where countries give principals the necessary autonomy to decide on these matters.

It is interesting to point out that the procedures for the filling of teaching posts is clearly different between OECD countries and those of Latin America. The hiring of teachers in countries like Finland is carried out by the school principal, and these are, at the same time, elected directly by the community. This contrasts greatly with Latin America where, as the table illustrates, this task is carried out by

Table 32.2 Percentage of primary school principals who carried out the following tasks at least weekly in the year 2008, for the selected countries

	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Paraguay	Peru	Uruguay
Management and administration						
Public relations	60	54	51	52	44	67
Infrastructure management	72	82	84	53	69	90
Accounting management	49	62	53	28	36	87
Management of administrative issues	80	86	89	93	85	86
Coordination of courses	31	32	36	38	34	25
Evaluation of student performance	32	50	45	44	23	33
Monitoring learning progress	36	49	33	43	27	28
Coordination of special measures	57	38	34	46	27	57
Register of learning progress	42	40	39	43	42	27
Discipline	90	88	83	90	90	91
Extracurricular activities organization	22	34	37	16	26	24
Educational support						
Observation of classes	75	63	60	72	65	72
Professional development	26	39	53	18	15	29
Support of classroom teachers	59	39	42	64	45	55
Evaluation of the use of textbooks	19	28	25	39	28	18
Attend classes	44	19	27	47	38	38
Give feedback on visits to classes	39	24	35	37	30	34
Evaluate student progress	25	26	33	33	23	16
Discuss new methods of instruction	23	36	43	32	18	16
Provide suggestions	62	60	53	55	41	53
Encourage and support teachers	35	62	58	44	27	53

Source: UNESCO (2008)

the provincial or municipal government, which is not only in charge of hiring teachers but also of posting them to specific schools.

If we consider another variable, such as the *principals' role* regarding curriculum content, research carried out by PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) shows that in some Latin American countries teachers and principals have very little autonomy in this regard (see Table 32.4).

While in Argentina and Brazil nearly three-quarters of students tested in PISA declare that teachers and principals of their schools have autonomy in making decisions in this field, the proportion drops to 54.31% and 59.47% in Colombia and Chile respectively. Uruguay and Mexico are extreme cases in this field, with virtually no autonomy for teachers and principals to decide on matters related to curriculum content.

Table 32.3 Level of decision making in primary schools, in selected countries for the year 2004

Country	Teacher recruitment	Teacher promotion	Salaries	Budget and use of resources	Maintenance	Books	School organization	Curriculum
Costa Rica	National	–	National	National	National	Parents	–	–
Chile	Municipal	Municipal	Municipal, National	–	Municipal	Municipal	–	–
Mexico	State, National	State, National	State	National	State	State, National		National
Panama	National	National	National	National	National School	National	School Municipal	National
Honduras	National, Department School	National	National	National Department	National, Municipal, School	National	National Department School	National
Guatemala	National, Municipal Parents	National	National Municipal	National	National, Municipal Parents	National	National Parents	National
Uruguay	National	National	National	National	National	National	National	National
Venezuela	National State	National State	National State	National State	National	National	–	–

Source: Based on PREAL data (2006)

Table 32.4 Principal and teacher autonomy in Latin America

Country	Degree of autonomy (%)[a]
Average OCDE	65.93
Uruguay	11.9
Mexico	13.7
Colombia	54.31
Chile	59.47
Brazil	74.33
Argentina	76.36

Source: OCDE 2006, Interactive Dataset PISA (http://pisa2006.acer.edu.au/)

[a]The question asked was: In your educational center, who has considerable responsibility over the following task?

New Responsibilities

In considering the current situation of principals in Latin America it is important to point out that, over the last decades, growing poverty rates and increasing levels of social exclusion have brought about a host of new tasks for schools and for teachers and principals. School staff is finding that they must take on new social roles, to the detriment of more pedagogical ones. Schools are being asked to provide what the family many times fails to deliver: affection, care, ethical and vocational guidance. Being a teacher or a principal in this new socialization context – especially in large metropolis – requires the development of a new set of complex professional skills (Vaillant and Marcelo 2009).

In summary, it appears that Latin American school principals tend to spend more time in management and administrative tasks than in those related to educational leadership and support for teachers. It should be the responsibility of the school principals, along with their teams, to define a strategic mission for the institution, to stimulate and coordinate their teaching staff and to motivate the students to learn. If we wish to see educational institutions reverse inequality, principals must play a more active role in this transformation.

In order to be an effective leader, it is necessary to have both adequate training and the necessary empowerment to exercise leadership. As far as training is concerned, the concern is that Latin America does not have, in most cases, specialized academic centers for the training of school principals.

Achieving Successful Leadership in Schools

In the last decades, there have been significant socio-economic and political changes which have deeply affected education institutions and, therefore, the way they are managed. Authors have long stated that school principals need to exercise leadership in two fundamental domains (Vandenberghe 1995). First, they need to be able to guide their schools in a quest for solutions to their problems in a participative and

democratic manner. Second, school heads should be able to impact their environment and be able to develop good communication channels with the community.

Currently, policy makers, technical teams, and analysts are searching for ways to improve the leadership skills of principals in Latin American schools. Though this has appeared as a growing area of concern in the region, it has long been a preoccupation of many policy makers around the world. Much of the literature on school leadership is summarized by Leithwood and colleagues (2006), who provide seven recommendations for achieving successful leadership in schools:

- School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning.
- Almost all successful leaders draw on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices.
- The ways in which leaders apply these basic leadership practices – not the practices themselves – demonstrate responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work.
- School leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment, and working conditions.
- School leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed.
- Some patterns of distribution are more effective than others.
- A small handful of personal traits explain a high proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness (Leithwood et al. 2006, p. 27).

Elmore (2004) offers another important contribution in his discussion on the difficulties that must be bridged in order to improve school leadership. Many of these difficulties are related to, what the author terms, "loose coupling" between a "technical core" of the education system and an "administrative superstructure" that works in disjunction. Elmore argues that, in general terms, participation in collaborative work increases commitment and satisfaction among teachers. However, in the absence of educational leadership, collaborative work is unlikely to result in concrete changes in practice, skills, or knowledge. Principals must provide a sense of organizational focus and guidance to the school staff (Elmore 2000, p. 17). He makes a claim for "deromantizing" the idea of leadership as something which is inherent and natural; leadership qualities can also be learned and developed. Additionally, Elmore uses the idea of *distributed leadership*, not in order to delude the principal's individual responsibility for the overall performance of the organization, but rather to convey the idea that leaders need to create a "common culture of expectations" by which everyone is held accountable for their contribution to the collective result. Creating this unity and not necessarily controlling every aspect of the instruction is the principal's core responsibility. He suggests five principles for this form of "distributed leadership" (pp. 20–21):

- The purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role;
- Instructional improvement requires continuous learning;

- Learning requires modeling;
- The roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution;
- The exercise of authority requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity.

There are interesting attempts to improve the principal's leadership in the international arena. Among them, Fink and Resnick (2001) describe the experience of two New York City districts that have implemented a program to improve and support the leadership of heads of schools.[4] Two lessons may be learned from this process: (a) schools are *nested communities* and the principal should be responsible for establishing a culture of learning within them; (b) the learning process of principals and teachers can be considered a *cognitive apprenticeship*, in the sense that, just like artisans, it takes place by observing masters at work. This study is inspirational in terms of suggesting changes that should take place in Latin American nations in order to improve school leadership. In the cases analyzed by Fink and Resnick (2001), improvement in the principal's leadership skills can be attributed to instances of apprenticeship, such as holding regular meetings with other principals to discuss problems, and visiting other principal's schools to observe teachers at work and collectively analyzing what they see. Meetings among principals and "problem sharing" are conceived as fundamental instances for support and imagining possible solutions to problems. In this model, principals among themselves serve as tutors and mentors.

Supervision and Leadership

There are strong findings that support the idea that teacher's performance is enhanced by strong leadership and positive school climates that focus on student learning. If principals in Latin America need to broaden their roles beyond administrative tasks in order to become true educational leaders, then it follows that they need (a) specialized training and (b) empowerment and support. As we have seen in the previous pages, school principals currently have neither one nor the other.

If leadership is not an innate and mystical trait but rather something that is developed, then monitoring and supervision are key for enabling these leaders to develop the necessary skills and abilities for the job. Little attention is given in Latin America to the monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of principals. Just like principals, supervisors assigned to the job spend most of their time carrying out administrative tasks in the education system instead of providing support and guidance for principals. Mechanisms need to be put in place in order to provide both supervisors and principals with the necessary support network.

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[4] District 2 is now one of the school districts with best results in the US. 60% of the students belong to families with low income (Elmore, op. cit.).

An interesting case in Latin America is discussed by Martin Carnoy (2007) who visited classrooms in Brazil, Chile and Cuba, in order to determine why indicators of performance in Cuba were much higher than in the other countries. Carnoy and his research team visited and filmed mathematics classes delivered to third graders; they carried out in-depth content analysis of texts, and interviewed teachers, principals, children, parents and educational leaders, in all three countries. The researchers found that in Cuba, heads of schools provide ample support and regular supervision to teachers, and that both teachers and principals felt that they shared responsibility for student learning. Though Carnoy points out that the Cuban system has obvious and severe drawbacks and that he is not suggesting that other countries adopt this model; nonetheless, there are lessons to be learned from the Cuban experience: "the state has to be much more of a guarantor of quality education for all – the state needs to take public responsibility for children's success" (p. 157).

Another interesting case in Latin America is provided by the Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETTs), which has among its main objectives to provide personalized classroom instruction ("coaching") as part of its professional development framework designed to improve the teaching of reading skills in grades 1–3. The evaluations and studies carried out by this organization suggest that, not only does it take more than a year to make any substantial changes, but that without the continuous support of school principals; teachers are not able to implement the desired teaching strategies.

Findings in Latin America regarding the vital role of leadership and principal support and supervision in order to improve teacher performance are consistent with the findings of research carried out internationally. Barber & Mourshed in the McKinsey Report (2007) studied the educational systems of countries with highest academic performance in PISA (Finland and South Korea for example) or in TIMSS (Singapore). Additionally, they included in their study regional educational systems identified as successful, such as in Chicago, Boston, and New York in the USA. This report concluded that differences in educational achievement are not explained by education spending. For example, Singapore has a lower spending per student than other countries, yet it usually gets better results in examinations. According to the authors, the key to educational success can be found in three main aspects: recruitment, training and teacher support within the classroom as well as the development of institutional devices to support students with learning difficulties.

Final Thoughts

This chapter has tried to show that principal leadership is pivotal and that it has a positive impact on the learning outcomes of children and adolescents. These effects tend to be more relevant where they are mostly needed, that is, in disadvantaged schools. Similarly, deficient leadership can produce the opposite effect, it can hinder student learning and affect the quality of the schools. It appears that the

institutional conditions in many Latin American nations are counterproductive in enabling effective leadership of school principals. As this chapter has shown, the situation of many public school principals is unfavorable; they are limited in their decision-making power; there are notorious deficiencies in the system for selection, promotion and development of heads of schools; and they are often overwhelmed with bureaucratic and administrative tasks that distract them from more substantial pedagogical ones.

Latin America needs more studies that show the effect or the impact of principal leadership on student learning. Principal leadership has been a central preoccupation in Anglo-Saxon education research, and it needs to become a key area of concern in Latin America and placed at the center of education policies, in order to be validated as a determining factor for achieving quality education.

In summary, it is necessary to improve our understanding of the ways in which principals can have a positive impact on the educational outcomes of students by detecting a set of leadership practices that effectively support teacher classroom performance. Studies in this area will not only help fill important education research gaps but, most importantly, they will help policy makers in the development of programs that support principal's leadership in schools. The empirical evidence from these studies should help to generate policies that take into account dimensions such as training, timing, and needed qualifications. In turn this will assist in the definition of a leadership profile against which to evaluate the principal's performance; one which is based on solid evidence, instead of intuition, tradition and mere ideology.

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Part VI
Changing Hearts and Minds: Building Leadership for Learning in Current School Leaders

Chapter 33
The Succession Challenge: Warm Bodies or Leaders of Learning?

Dean Fink

I have spent the past year interviewing principals in an American school district, a Canadian school board, and head teachers in a British local authority. My sad conclusion is that "leadership for learning" is one of those wonderful aspirational phrases like "no child left behind," a "world class" education, and "raising standards" that provide lofty sound bites at conferences and in newspapers and journals, but obscure the reality of what is going on in schools among students, teachers, and leaders. In the oft-quoted words of Fullan (1994), "What looks like clarity at the top may contribute more to clutter at the bottom" (p. 4).

All of the over 50 school leaders I interviewed expressed a passionate desire to be leaders of learning as they understood the concept, but the "clutter" kept getting in the way. Ruth, a mid-career American primary principal described by her supervisor as "wonderful," commented that she was "miserable" and "frustrated" by

> this whole thing with No Child Left Behind, accountability, data, the amount of paper and less time for the work I love to do which is coaching teachers, creating a vision for the school, being passionate in getting to know the kids. The piece I am frustrated about is how do we get better if we are so busy spending time with the paper things we are doing, and we are losing the passion and the creativity? I feel that so much of what we do is about aligning documents, making up paper plans, but for me, the job is creating the story, somehow the passion is lost.

In a similar vein, Ted, a British head concluded a questionnaire on leadership succession by writing.

> There are too many government initiatives brought out in one school year. My staff looks at me and says no thanks. Being a head is actually not worth aspiring to in a small school with small salary and HUGE[1] responsibilities as there are not enough staff members to carry them out. Salaries should be addressed; new initiatives; heads given time to research and look at their school instead of throwing a cold cup a soup down your neck in 3 minutes at lunchtime whilst being asked to make life changing decisions! Give Heads some respect back – who is in charge?

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[1]Emphasis is the respondent's, not mine.

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In Ontario Canada, Phil, a 38-year-old second year primary principal, who the system considers "very successful," stated, "it has become a role that has become unmanageable. That is what is perceived by staff and by the community." His vice (assistant) principal, who her principal describes as "incredible," has decided to revert to a teaching position to try to return to a more balanced life style. Potential leaders seeing the frustrations of leaders like Ruth, the anguish of school heads like Ted, and the travails of principals like Phil, who face multiple and often conflicting requirements, have decided in increasing numbers that their life involves more than work, and the disadvantages of leadership outweigh any advantages, such as higher pay and the increased influence that a leadership role would bring. This complexity has created a "succession challenge" (Fink 2010) in which school districts in most western countries are hard pressed to replace their retiring *boomer* generation of educational leaders with new leaders who are ready, able, and above all willing to become leaders of learning.

At the moment, much of the discussion at policy levels seems to consider leadership succession to be strictly a problem of mathematical misalignment – too many jobs and not enough people to fill them (Pont et al. 2008b). Well-documented reports from Canada (Williams 2001), the United States (Pounder and Merril 2001), the United Kingdom (Howson 2005), Australia (Gronn and Rawlings-Sanaei 2003), and New Zealand (Brookings et al. 2003) among many other nations (Lumby et al. 2008) appear to show that there is a supply and demand problem. But if there is a problem, and "if" is the operative word here because the accuracy of supply and demand statistics for leadership posts are often politicized and of questionable veracity, the succession challenge has more to do with politics and educational philosophy than with issues of supply and demand. It has more to do with increasing pressure placed on school and other educational leaders as a result of innovation overload and change-related chaos (Abrahamson 2004), the unwillingness of many educators, especially younger potential aspirants, to conform to policies developed by older generations that they view as inconsistent with their values, goals, and life styles. This is attended by pressure to support activities that they believe have more to do with good politics than good education.

From the pure supply point of view, leadership succession is not a challenge at all; it is easy for school jurisdictions and other governing bodies to find warm bodies to fill leadership positions. There are many people who think they can run a school or a school district. The challenge of course is to find and assign or hire the right warm body in the right place at the right time for the right reasons. Successful leadership succession, therefore, really depends on the purposes of educational jurisdictions and how well their prospective leaders can meet organizational goals. If all that counts in education is good accounting, paper management, and political score keeping, then anyone with a managerial background will probably do (Morrison 2009). Some school jurisdictions that have defined their purposes in terms that valorize only improved test scores have done just that. For example, a report by PriceWaterhouseCooper (2007) has urged the British government to address its succession challenge by recruiting non-teachers to leads its schools. Such a policy (BBC News 2007) would, as Gunter and Forrester (2007) have

pointed out, downgrade the status of teaching "in comparison to generic leadership skills and attributes" (p. 6) and degrade the very concept of "leader of learning."

Managers or Leaders of Learning

Stein and Nelson's (2003) examination of the interaction of instructional leaders supporting the teaching of mathematics suggests that leading learning is a complex process that requires "learning content knowledge" that they define as "the kind of knowledge that will equip administrators to be strong instructional leaders" (p. 424). They indicate that instructional leadership requires four "layers" of knowledge:

- An inner-most layer: knowledge of the substance/subject matter: What the work is about?
- A second layer: knowledge of how to facilitate the learning: The how of the work?
- A third layer: knowledge of how teachers learn to teach and how others can assist their learning: The how of learning for the previous two layers.
- A fourth-level layer: knowledge of how to guide the learning of other adult professionals: The how of learning for the previous three layers.

This is a level of sophisticated knowledge that requires an in-depth understanding of the teaching-learning process gained through experience, study, and reflection that non-educators and prematurely promoted educators would not normally possess or easily acquire in a short course or an immersion program. For example, a Canadian school leader described how her "sophisticated knowledge" contributed to her work with children and their parents.

> There's no way in five years of teaching experience that a person can know and understand all three divisions (ages 4 to 16), and that worries me because, number one, I don't know how you can support your staff and number two, I don't know how you can be believable to parents that you really have a clue on what's going on for their children. Whereas I pulled on my experience so often especially working with parents of special needs kids, but also parents whose children were struggling in whatever way, or even parents whose kids were gifted and didn't understand why we might not want to identify that particular thing until later in their life.

If the educational goal of an organization or school jurisdiction is to mobilize teachers and students to achieve narrow short-term targets and they are not too choosy about how to get there, then a succession challenge really does not exist. They can manage by hiring people from outside of education or by rushing young educators through preparatory courses in educational management. If, however, the concern is to recruit, select, and develop leaders of learning who possess the "learning content knowledge" to contribute to the preparation of young people for successful participation in a knowledge society, and are ready to treat teachers and other educational workers as professionals, and parents and communities as partners, then all those responsible for leadership succession have a real challenge in front of them.

   The evidence suggests that in most countries there is no need to fill the ranks of educational leadership with displaced executives from the corporate world or out-of-work politicians. There are sufficient qualified educators who possess the "learning content knowledge" to replace the retiring leaders. The (Howson 2008) report on the state of the leadership supply in England, based on applications for headships indicates an improving situation and only pockets of difficulty in recruitment. In fact, the UK government plans to halve the number of candidates taking the National Professional Qualification for Headship program over the next few years because "too many don't bother applying for the top job" (Barker 2008, p. 1). Rather than a supply problem in England, the real dilemma seems to be the unwillingness of deputy heads, middle leaders, and teacher leaders to aspire to and seek headships (Curtis 2008).

   A recent Ontario study shows that the pipeline is full; there are plenty of people with principals' qualifications in the province. The Ontario Teachers' Council reported that the number of its members with principal qualifications has increased each year from 16,357 in 2003 to 17,335 in 2007 and approximately 44% of the 2007 figure was under 44 years of age (The Learning Partnership 2008, pp. 61–62). That's the good news. The bad news is that the "motivation for potential candidates to apply for school and system leadership positions also appears to be diminishing. Salary differences between teaching and administrative roles are becoming less of a motivator" (p. 75).

   This theme of diminishing interest in formal leadership roles in education is widespread. In Australia, Barty et al. (2005) reported that, based on the best available data, there is no shortage of qualified potential leaders in Australia but there is "consistent evidence that significant numbers of teachers are deterred by the modern principalship with its emphasis on management rather than educational leadership, does… point strongly to the need for coherent and robust efforts to redesign this critical educational work" (p. 1). Similarly, a recent OECD (2008) look at education in New Zealand identified

> a shortage of suitably qualified teachers applying for such positions. Typically, the reason cited for not applying is that the requirements of the job have grown to the point where they seem unmanageable. As workload increases, there is no corresponding reduction in ancillary functions which are unrelated to the professional role. There are issues around the relative remuneration and/or the "do-ability" of the job. (OECD 2008, p. 34)

Over Burdened, Over Worked, and Overwhelmed

The pipeline may be full, but it has clearly stopped flowing. The Learning Partnership (2008) provides the following rather typical summary of reasons that leadership succession has become an international dilemma:

- Job is viewed as very stressful;
- Time required to fulfill job responsibilities has increased substantially making it difficult to balance family and school demands;
- It is difficult to satisfy the many demands of parents and the community;
- The issues related to poverty, lack of family supports, and other societal problems take time away from focusing on instructional issues;

- The funding and resources available are insufficient to do the job;
- The salary and compensation are inadequate;
- There is not enough autonomy in the role;
- There is an increase in violence in the schools;
- The recruitment, training, and induction processes are inadequate;
- The role of the principal is primarily managerial and not educational;
- The potential for not being able to return to the teaching ranks, if required;
- The costs associated with acquiring the qualifications necessary for administrative positions; and
- Management–union relationships (p. 86).

Thomson (2009) captures the underlying contradiction in modern leadership between the requirement for leaders to be visionary, creative, and entrepreneurial "leaders of learning" and the policy realities they live with when she asks, how "it is actually possible for school leaders to develop a vision for education in situations where much of what they do is prescribed and delimited, and where there can be harsh consequences for going against policy, or simply failing to live up to it?" (p. 59).

To survive, leading learning has become a subversive activity, a game which most experienced school leaders that I interviewed know how to play. They have figured out how to gate-keep in the interests of their students, teachers, and schools. Over time, they have acquired the skills necessary to choose what to endorse, what to block, and what to subvert. A long-serving Ontario principal who has been principal of three different schools in the district stated that

> when I first got the job it was much more of an entrepreneurial job – now it is much more structured – now you have to fit school interests within a certain framework of provincial and board requirements. I see my role as much less entrepreneurial and a great deal more pressured to comply. But after 13 years I'm more conscious of what is going to cost me my pension and what is going to send me to jail so after I consider those factors, I am confident of what my school needs and proceed ahead, so I guess I become passively subversive to those things that are imposed.

Similarly, in England some heads have become quite proficient at "target gaming" through strategies such as the "ratchet effects" (negotiating undemanding targets) or "threshold effects" (concentrating on children on the bubble and boosting their scores above the desired threshold) (Hood 2007).

Gronn (2008) describes the British approach to educational change as "war on schools." His description will strike a chord with many educators around the world because he explains that while schools and schooling have always been "battlegrounds" among various interest groups, it has now become a media "blood sport" with government collusion.

> The ante is upped considerably when the state's strategy hardens into one of rounding on its own schools, especially the people in charge of them, not merely by means of the compliance afforded by a vast regime of audit and surveillance, but… resort to public humiliation and demonisation… has now become a weapon of first resort in this war. Indeed so far have their rules of engagement shifted that government spokespersons often combine forces with media to chase down instances of feral leadership in order to publicly purge them. Is it any wonder that such experiences spawn a culture of complaint and lament among heads and principals' associations…. (p. 174)

Smithers contends that the reluctance of classroom teachers to become heads was an important factor in the rise in the number of failing British primary schools. He declared, "Heads are being held responsible for their schools in the way football managers are being held responsible for their team's performance" (Barker 2008). "The aspiring head is likely to go for a top performing school in the same way as football managers want a high-flying club rather than the Macclesfields[2] of this world" (Garner 2007). Like the manager of a sports team, principals can often feel very lonely especially in a crisis. "Schools are not shut off from what happens outside the school gates and they must often work through highly complex and emotive issues. The loneliness of leadership is palpable when heads talk about what this actually means in practice" (Thomson 2009, p. 59).

A recent OECD study of education in five OECD countries (Pont et al. 2008a) summarizes the leadership supply and demands challenge this way:

> There are concerns across countries that the role of principal as conceived for needs of the past is no longer appropriate. In many countries, principals have heavy workloads; many are reaching retirement, and it is getting harder to replace them. Potential candidates often hesitate to apply, because of overburdened roles, insufficient preparation and training, limited career prospects and inadequate support. (p. 9)

To this end they recommend that policy makers need to:

- Provide higher degrees of autonomy with appropriate support. School leaders need time, capacity and support to focus on the practices most likely to improve learning. Greater degrees of autonomy should be coupled with new models of distributed leadership, new types of accountability, and training and development for school leadership.
- Redefine school leadership responsibilities for improved student learning. Policy makers and practitioners need to ensure that the roles and responsibilities associated with improved learning outcomes are at the core of school leadership practice.
- Develop school leadership frameworks for improved policy and practice. School leadership frameworks can help provide guidance on the main characteristics, tasks and responsibilities of effective school leaders and signal the essential character of school leadership as leadership for learning. (Pont et al. 2008c, pp. 1–2)

Ironically, while offering these solutions, OECD is part of the problem. It has contributed to the succession challenge and undermined leadership for learning by turning education into a global rat race through PISA[3] and similar international competitive league tables in which a nation's ranking becomes a matter of national pride or disgrace, and a source of government pressure for ever improving results on heads and principals. These international comparisons along with the entire standards/standardization movement with its targets, tests, and tables are a part of

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[2]Macclesfield is a British soccer team noted for its futility.

[3]Programme for International Student Assessment, see http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,2987, en_32252351_32235731_1_1_1_1_1,00.html.

the educational legacy of the very large, dedicated, hardworking, and self-absorbed *baby boomer* generation.

Baby Boomers and Their Babies

Born between 1946 and 1963,[4] *boomers* came of age in the 1960s and 1970s when times were good, the economy was growing, expansion was everywhere, and change was possible. The defining quality of the boomers was optimism – "all things are possible if we just work hard enough" (Lancaster and Stillman 2002, p. 36). They were also very competitive; they had to be with so many fighting for places in good schools, good jobs, and teaching positions. As they have matured they have changed the world around them. They revolutionized sexual mores; transformed attitudes towards reproductive rights, and for the first time, a generation demonstrated a genuine interest in ecology. As one early boomer expressed it "we were eaten up by intensity" (Underwood 2007, p. 102). Now as the first wave of boomers approaches retirement, many have decided not to retire but to refocus (Marks 2009). Some have simply refused to retire altogether and continue on, much to the frustration of younger generations, while others have moved on to second careers.

In education, boomers have elevated the market from a useful economic device for the distribution of goods and services to an ideology that has infused what Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) have described as "second" and "third" way thinking in the past 20 years, and in its purest forms opened the public sector to private and individualistic forms of competition to motivate the good and drive out the bad. We see manifestation of this worldview in league tables, adequate yearly progress, school takeovers by senior levels of government, charter schools, and vouchers. Leaders are seen as entrepreneurial and heroic, ceaselessly marketing their schools, pressuring all and sundry to raise tests scores, accommodating customers, and outsmarting the school down the road to attract the best students and most supportive parents.

Baby boomers who dominate most of the positions of power in governments, school districts, and even schools have defined educational leadership in their own image, and expect, and often demand that younger generations, *Generation X* and the *millennials* or as some have called them *Generation Y*, must follow their lead. But the fact remains, they are aging, and like all generations will slowly disappear and so will their ideas of organizations and leadership.

It will not be sufficient to dress up age-old approaches to educational leadership and expect that they are appropriate for a new age and for new generations, but rather it is necessary to redefine and redraft leadership philosophy and practices to

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[4] Although the term "generations" is often used in social and statistical studies, there is no scientifically agreed upon definition of the term and its use is often rather arbitrary. Strauss and Howe (1997, p. 16), two of the most prolific writers on the topic, define a generation as "the aggregate of all the people born over roughly the span of a phase of life who share a common location in history and, hence a common collective persona".

correspond more closely to the values, outlook, and life styles of succeeding generations, and to respond to the emerging issues of a knowledge society (Hargreaves 2003; Toffler and Toffler 2006). An old Hebrew proverb with a slight modification should guide our efforts to address the succession challenge: "*Do not* confine your future leaders to your own *learning*, for they were born of another time." A recent study in Ontario advised that this

> new generation of leaders is different in many ways from previous or current generations and we need to ensure that we understand their values and aspirations and how to meet their needs. They are our future and we need to invest in them appropriately. (The Learning Partnership 2008)

Squeezed in a "demographic trough" between the huge boomer generation and the potentially larger millennial generation is *gen. X*. Born between 1963 and 1978[5], X'ers have often been described as skeptical or even cynical. Their skepticism is well founded. In contrast to boomers who grew up in times of economic growth, X'ers matured in the eighties and early nineties during times of economic hardship and dislocation. When they left school, jobs were hard to come by, even in teaching. As they have matured, they have witnessed their parents' and older siblings' loyalty to corporations and public institutions rewarded with dismissal and redundancy as corporations and public services sought to further enhance productivity by downsizing, outsourcing, restructuring, or reengineering, allegedly to meet the demands of the global market place. To many X'ers, however, teaching is just a good job with good holidays and reasonable pay – certainly not a "calling" or "mission" as some boomers might insist (Johnson 2004). Lusting and competing for leadership roles like their boomer older brothers and sisters is just not in their makeup (Donaldson 2007). For X'ers, their need for balance in life is a vital driving force and motivator.

For at least the next 10 years, efforts to replace retiring early boomers will have to come from these comparatively few, publicly skeptical, organizational mavericks who find competitive league tables, standardized testing, and teaching a prescribed curriculum alien to their generational ethos. These strategies are seen as part of the boomer's ideology to make young people conform to their narcissistic image of the educated person. X'ers view the boomer's approach to leadership and change as "wrong headed, atavistic, and chock full of arrogant self importance" (Zemke et al. 2000, p. 110). Seeking leadership to achieve purposes with which they disagree within a system whose values they reject has discouraged many X'ers from seeking leadership positions. With boomers staying in leadership roles longer than expected, however, and the leading edge of the next generation, the millennials, having now reached 32 years of age, X'ers will in time be viewed as that brief interlude between the boomers and children of the boomers and probably will have little lasting impact upon education and the nature of educational leadership.

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[5]These dates are contestable. 1963 is the first year the birth control pill became widely used and began a demographic downturn in most western countries. 1978 and the oil shortage is usually considered the beginning of the economic downturn of the late 1970s and into the 1980s.

The transition to the millennials that will take place within the next few years, raises the question, will the newest generation, the boomers' babies, be any more compliant and properly respectful of existing institutions and "designer" leadership (Gronn 2003) than their older siblings the X'ers? On the surface, millennials have been well prepared to perpetuate the standardization agenda. After all, this is the generation that the boomer designed educational systems has trained to conform to standardized approaches to testing, teaching, and curriculum over the past 15 years. They played the game, they jumped the hurdles, they passed the tests, and now they are ready to take on the world. Or are they? Will they meet the succession challenge and fill the leadership roles vacated by retiring boomers? They have the numbers[6]; do they have the desire? Will they be prepared? Will they make a difference? The answer is – it depends. It depends on whether this is a generation that is "more interesting, more confident, less hidebound and uptight, better educated, more creative, in some essential fashion, unafraid" (Martin and Tulgan 2001, p. 3), or is it, as professor of English Mark Baurlein (2008) concluded, the "dumbest generation" that suffers from "vigorous indiscriminate ignorance?" "No cohort in human history," he proclaimed, "has opened such a fissure between its material conditions and its intellectual attainments." None, he asserts, "has experienced so many technological enhancements and yielded so little mental progress" (p. 36). It is probably neither and both. The millennial generation is different from any preceding generation because it is the *net* generation; a generation of young people quite conversant with laptops, blackberries, and "I phones" – a generation that is continually connected to the internet. Like any large generation such as the boomers, this technologically sophisticated generation will shape educational leadership and the world around it to fit its values, life goals, and ways of thinking and leading. Growing up with Face Book, You Tube, My Space, Wikis, blogging, twittering, text messaging, and interactive games, millennials are the first "global generation ever"; they "are smarter quicker, and more tolerant of diversity than their predecessors. They care strongly about social justice and the problems faced by society and are typically engaged in some kind of civic activity at school, work or in their communities" (Tapscott 2009, p. 6). They rallied in the hundreds of thousands to assist the victims of hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, the tragic Tsunami of 2004 and the unprecedented flooding in Pakistan.

One view of this generation is that it will burst the bonds of industrial age structures and cultures and move the education of our young people into a high-tech era of collaboration, innovation, and creativity. Another reading might suggest, however, that this is a generation that is ill prepared for the hard work, perseverance, and sustained inquiry that educational leadership requires and is more interested in going along, getting along, and when things get tough, moving along. An Australian

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[6] Approximately 78 million in the United States according to Stephey, M. J. (2008, April 16). Gen-X: The ignored generation? *Time*. Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599, 1731528,00.html. Accessed December 29, 2008

principal who recently visited a number of leadership training sites around the world summarized her view of the younger generation this way:

> To me, and I suspect this is the case in more places than Australia from what I saw, Generations X and certainly Y want their life first and work is just that. Somehow I wonder how we boomers got so consumed with the desire to live for our work. I don't think this will be as much the case in 10–15 years. I also see the Xs and especially Ys working and leading differently – with a shift to more (not always appropriate) delegation, committee work, talking, linking (yes, they are the kings of connection) and this is certainly how they operate.[7]

Confronted by leadership shortages and conflicting generational values, there are many promising examples of efforts to meet and defeat the succession challenge in all parts of the globe. For example, some jurisdictions have experimented with non-traditional leadership structures that employ various shared leadership models (BBC News 2009; Court 2003; Grubb and Flessa 2006; McQuaid 2000; Thomson and Blackmore 2006). Glatter and Harvey (2006), in their report to the British government on alternative leadership structures, provide a somewhat muted endorsement of such arrangements and advise extreme caution. Perhaps the most promising approach builds on the successful private sector practice of creating "pools" of potential leaders from which the system can draw when openings occur.

Pipeline, Pools, and Reservoirs

In the past few years, governments around the world have spent substantial amounts of money filling the leadership "pipeline" to ensure a ready supply of prepared leaders. This approach, as indicated previously, has had limited success in addressing the succession challenge. As a result, a subtle but important shift in thinking has taken place among some educational decision makers in more progressive jurisdictions (Huber 2008). Where once money spent on leadership recruitment and development was considered a cost, it is now viewed as an investment in the future and as a result some school authorities and districts have shifted focus from "replacement planning" in which specific people are identified to fill certain jobs usually through open competition, to a "succession management" approach which involves "the accelerated development of a select group of high-potential individuals for both current and future roles that may not be identifiable at present" (Busine and Watt 2005, p. 230). Rather than "hire and hope," these school authorities have adopted a "grow your own" philosophy.

While "grow your own" does not preclude hiring high quality candidates from outside the school or system, it has the potential to reduce mistakes because "pool" members are known: "warts and all." It allows effective use of resources

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[7]Personal communication.

of time, money, and human energy, and since good development positions such as assistant principal are limited in number, pools provide an alternative development opportunity for valued staff members. "Grow your own" ensures a ready supply of prepared leaders even in a crisis, reduces the expense of recruiting widely, precludes the high costs of turnover and de-motivation when outside hires are brought into established settings, and reduces the amount of time for new leaders to "get up to speed" because they already understand the structures and culture of the organization.

Developing this pool depends in large measure on how well the organization encourages and develops its "reservoir" of leadership and directs it in ways that give teachers and other educational workers opportunities to exercise their latent leadership potential in rewarding and productive ways. In practice this means distributing leadership across an organization rather than depending solely on historic vertical structures. As Gronn (2002) explains, "distributed leadership invites consideration of an organisation's overall capacity for leadership, rather than helping to perpetuate the idea of the power of one" (p. 17).

Various authors, particularly in the United Kingdom, hold out great hope that distributed forms of leadership will spread within schools and across schools within local authorities and create new patterns of networked leadership that not only address recruitment difficulties, but inspire systemic improvement in student learning. Hopkins et al. (2009) predict that meeting the contemporary challenges of schooling will require school leaders to "consider new models of leadership and governance to appropriately distribute an increasing range of responsibilities to a wider and differentiated pool of leadership expertise" (p. 9). In a similar vein, Harris (2009) writes that the present leadership situation in the United Kingdom invites

> new forms of leadership and decision making processes that are *widely distributed* within, between and across schools plus partner organisations. It will require leadership that is distributed across into the "community" in its widest and most diverse sense. It will require:
>
> – Leadership that builds capacity within schools, communities and systems,
> – Leadership that crosses structural, cultural and personal barriers,
> – Leadership that generates relational and social capital,
> – Leadership that sustains performance,
> – Leadership that supports re-design and self-renewal. (p. 1)

The enthusiasm for distributed forms of leadership is well placed as long as certain conditions prevail. When Harris (2009) argues that changes in British education are "predicated on greater freedom and autonomy for schools and the system as a whole" (p. 1), she succinctly captures the essence of what is required on a policy level to ensure that schools and districts realize the potential of distributed leadership models. Similarly, as Collins (2009) explains in the business world "when bureaucratic rules erode an ethic of freedom and responsibility within a framework of core values and demanding standards, you've become infected with the disease of mediocrity" (p. 56).

Conclusion

The succession challenge as I have suggested here is the product of three interrelated themes: shifting demographics, the attractiveness (or lack of it) of leadership jobs, and conflicting generational aspirations. Many of the younger people who are quite capable of replacing retiring principals and other educational leaders see their jobs as unattractive and unrewarding. From a generational perspective, these jobs are incompatible with their life styles and career goals. As a result, I have suggested throughout that contemporary approaches to leadership promote a kind of instrumental managerialism that prevents educational leaders, with the best will in the world, from becoming and functioning as leaders of learning in their schools and districts.

Albert Einstein is often attributed with the aphorism that "insanity is doing the same thing over and over while expecting different result." Regardless of how it is packaged, more and more of the same old approaches to leadership development and succession without profoundly changing our social vision and within that larger picture redefining the purposes of education and of educational leadership is just insane. The succession challenge then is to rethink our notions of leadership and of leadership development designed "for another time" to invite, prepare, and sustain newer generations to truly become leaders of learning.

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Chapter 34
Building Leadership Capacity
Across 5,000 Schools*

**Laurie Pedwell, Ben Levin, Barry Pervin, Mary Jean Gallagher,
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Introduction

The province of Ontario has been engaged in a large, and to date reasonably
successful, effort to improve student outcomes (Levin et al. 2008). Not surprisingly,
efforts to improve leadership across the system have been an important part of the
overall strategy, since Leithwood et al. (2004), in a review of research, concluded
that school leadership, especially by the principal, is the second most important
factor in schools, next to the teacher, when it comes to impact on student learning.

Real and lasting improvement in Ontario schools requires every school to have
a culture of collaborative professionalism in which teachers work together to use
evidence and research to improve their practice and students' learning. The creation
of thousands of such schools is a call for better leadership throughout the system.
In addition, school district leadership needs ongoing development to improve the

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ability of leaders to act together within districts to implement the core priorities and provide the supporting conditions.

Although a great deal has been written about leadership and leadership development, the practicalities of trying to improve leadership across an entire, large education system are less well-known. This chapter describes a systematic leadership development initiative over several years in the Province of Ontario, Canada, outlining the strategy in use, the way the strategy developed, and the various barriers and constraints on leadership development at a system level. This chapter focuses on the context, development and components of the Ontario Leadership Strategy (OLS) and complements the Chap. 20 that analyzes theories behind results so far, and learning arising from the strategy. Several of the initiatives in this chapter are also discussed more fully in that chapter.

The OLS did not emerge fully fledged but rather was the result of several years of experimentation and rather ad hoc leadership efforts. These developments led both to the demand for, and acceptance of, a stronger province-wide strategy, as both the Ministry and various leadership groups saw that the steps currently taken needed to be expanded and systematized. After 5 years, Ontario now has a strong and sustainable leadership strategy that has broad acceptance from all major stakeholders and is increasingly well-integrated with other aspects of education policy.

The Ontario Context

Ontario is Canada's largest province with about 2 million children in its publicly funded education system. That system is organized into four sets of locally elected school boards with overlapping boundaries reflecting Canada's constitutional requirement for public support of minority language (French, in Ontario) and religious minority (Catholic, in Ontario). All four school systems are publicly governed by elected boards and 100% publicly financed. School districts are governed by elected boards of trustees, and are responsible for the employment of all educators, including superintendents and principals.

Ontario school districts range in size from a few hundred students to about 250,000 students in the Toronto District School Board, one of the largest in North America. The six largest urban districts in Ontario combined have about a third of all the students in the province; however, many districts cover large territories with very small populations, particularly in the north of the province. Districts also vary greatly in their level of service. For example, some large districts have quite sophisticated leadership development processes while other districts have virtually nothing in this regard. There are nearly 5,000 schools in Ontario, many of which are small – the average elementary school has about 350 students and the average secondary school fewer than 1,000 students and many are smaller than that. The province has some 7,500 principals and vice principals, and 72 superintendents (called directors) and about 500 assistant superintendents (called supervisory officers).

Ontario's school enrolment is very diverse, with 27% born outside of Canada and 20% visible minorities. The Toronto area receives more than 125,000 new immigrants each year from dozens of different countries.

Thus education in Ontario has all the challenges one might anticipate – large urban areas and very remote rural areas, significant urban and rural poverty levels, high levels of population diversity, areas with sharply dropping enrolment and others with rapid growth (Levin et al. 2008).

Ontario's 120,000 teachers are organized into 4 unions. These unions have significant political influence. Collective agreements are made at the district level; however, the government also plays a role in facilitating these agreements to support the focus on improving student outcomes (Levin 2008). Principals were members of teacher unions until 1997 when a previous government removed them by law.

School leaders in Ontario are organized at three levels – principals and vice-principals, supervisory officers (who are superintendents or others who supervise schools and principals) and directors of education (chief superintendents, who are hired by and report directly to elected school boards). Each sector – Catholic, French and public – has its own separate voluntary association for each of these groups to provide professional learning, advocacy and supports for their members. There are, then, nine organizations of leaders in Ontario, each of which conducts its own extensive professional development and support programmes for its members. This makes leadership development work more complex, though these groups do often work together and all of them work with the Ministry of Education in various ways.

An independent and self-financing College of Teachers controls certification and qualifications for teachers, principals and supervisory officers. Ontario has strict qualifications for school leaders that have in the past made it difficult to hire persons without Ontario qualifications. However, with the development of new Canadian labour mobility agreements, this closed shop is gradually being opened up to persons who hold leadership positions and qualifications from other jurisdictions.

When the current government came into power in 2003, education was among its very highest priorities, and it introduced a strong emphasis on improving education outcomes for students. The Ontario strategy has had the same three core priorities since 2005:

- High levels of student achievement and well-being
- Reduced gaps in student achievement
- Increased public confidence in publicly funded education.

The main strategies to reach these goals included:

- Improve teaching of literacy and numeracy across 4,000 elementary schools; 75% of students to reach provincial standard at age 12
- Improve graduation rates across more than 800 high schools; 85% of students to graduate within 5 years of starting ninth grade
- Reduce class size in primary years to maximum of 20 in at least 90% of classes (accomplished as of 2007)

This comprehensive strategy was intended to be implemented in a way that would be coherent, provided the necessary supports and resources, was respectful of educators and engaged the broader public (Levin 2008). The strategy was supported by significant financial investments – a 30% increase in provincial funding per student since 2003. In its second term, starting late in 2007, the government

noted that while significant progress had been made on the core priorities, there was more work to be done. Through the release of a paper entitled, *Reach Every Student*: *Energizing Ontario Education* (Ontario Ministry of Education 2008a), the government renewed commitment to the core priorities with a plan to go deeper on earlier strategies as well as maintaining attention to key supporting conditions such as safe schools, parent involvement, aboriginal education, labour peace, using data effectively and so on. Full development of the Ontario Leadership Strategy (OLS) has also been part of this second term strategy.

Early Leadership Development Efforts, 2004–2006

From the beginning of the improvement effort in 2003, leadership was recognized as an important element of any attempt to improve student outcomes. In the early stages of the overall reform effort, the Minister and senior ministry officials met frequently with the leadership organizations and heard their concerns about the challenges facing their members. Just as the overall Ontario strategy built on the goodwill and professionalism of teachers, so it was recognized that the ministry had to engage school leaders in ways that built their support and commitment as well as their capacity – what Levin (2008) calls "will" and "skill".

Some leadership development work began immediately after 2003. The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS), charged with improving elementary school literacy and numeracy outcomes, supported various leadership development projects. In secondary schools, the Ministry funded positions for "Student Success Leaders" in every district. Other leadership work was occurring in areas such as curriculum and assessment review, special education, safe and healthy schools, parent engagement and so on. However, these were typically individual initiatives by units within the ministry with no overall coordination. In the early stages of such a large reform effort it is more important to create energy and progress, while alignment and coherence, also critically important, can be addressed a little later as the demand for them inevitably emerges from stakeholders.

In 2004, another early leadership initiative launched by the LNS, in partnership with the principals' associations, was "Leading Student Achievement: Our Principal Purpose" (LSA) which works to support school leaders in improving student outcomes, building professional learning communities within and across their schools and districts and using evidence-based inquiry to inform instructional practice. The project supports face-to-face workshops, electronic networks, web conferences and other resources for schools. It is in its fifth year and has been enlarged to include secondary schools. Findings from the project (see Chap. 20) have contributed to the ministry's refinement of its strategies.

Another early initiative in 2004 was the establishment of the Minister's Principal Reference Group, an advisory group of 20 practicing principals and vice-principals which provides advice on ministry policy and programme implementation. These

school leaders provide feedback that reflects their individual experiences in schools selected from across the different demographics of the province. Ministers of Education have often attended these meetings and valued the principals' advice for its grass roots, practical nature.

In 2005, the Minister of Education released a discussion paper, "New Supports for Principals and Vice-principals in Ontario Publicly funded Schools" (Ontario Ministry of Education 2005), which outlined five goals to support school leaders: ensure conditions to permit leaders to function as "instructional leaders", provide high quality training and supports, increase principal and vice-principals' input to the system, improve respect and security, and better define their role. Most of the recommendations in that paper have been addressed, although principals remained concerned about job security issues and their ability to negotiate with their districts about their terms and conditions of employment. While most districts were able to work out mutually acceptable agreements with their principals and vice-principals, the principals' associations continued to raise the issue with respect to "outlier" districts which they felt were more arbitrary.

Two areas also mentioned in the discussion paper were mentoring for newly appointed leaders and improved performance appraisal for principals and vice-principals. Both these issues were high on the list of the principal groups and also fit with ministry views about improved leadership and both are discussed more fully in the Chap. 20. Connecting to the theory of action for the OLS, mentoring and the annual growth plan required by the appraisal system supports leaders' professional growth, while the goal-oriented performance plan in the appraisal model focuses its efforts on student achievement.

As these early initiatives developed, ministry and sector leaders recognized that these efforts were both uncoordinated and insufficient. To the leaders in schools and districts, all these separate efforts were perceived as a jagged front for leadership. The province required a more systematic approach to supporting and developing leadership in schools and districts to have the intended effect on student outcomes. The Leadership Development Branch was created to play a role in coordinating and aligning these efforts.

A first important step by the Branch was the development of the *Putting Ontario's leadership framework into action: A guide for school and system leaders* (Institute for Educational Leadership 2008) to serve as a province-wide common description of the competencies and practices of good leadership based on research and professional practice. It outlines five key domains of leadership and specifies a range of specific skills, attributes and practices for education leaders. The Framework was developed through a collaborative process with leadership groups and the work of leading researchers such as Ken Leithwood.

Acceptance of the OLF as an important basis for leadership work was more easily garnered from stakeholders, however, than from various branches within the ministry of education. Principals and district leaders found the OLF to be a practical guide for their work and they appreciated having a common language for discourse with others about leadership; for example, some districts embedded the OLF competencies into the job specifications for their supervisory officers. But

branches within the ministry had their own complex agendas, sometimes their own leadership development activities, and often did not see the relevance of the OLF to these agendas. This is one of the reasons why alignment became a key element of the theory of action for the OLS.

Ministry and sector leaders all recognized that an effective leadership strategy needed to be a shared effort between the ministry and the leadership groups. We considered various ways of addressing this need. Given how much work was already being done by the various organizations, one strong need was better coordination and greater synergy in these efforts. Working with other groups, the ministry developed an on-line version of a professional learning calendar to post all provincial and association in-service sessions for leaders to be offered over the course of each year, updating it each quarter. This allowed districts to better plan their leadership development activities by tapping into the listings in the provincial calendar.

The calendar, while useful, was only a modest step towards better coordination of efforts. At the same time, we did not want to create whole new institutions in a field already crowded with organizations that had their own programmes and interests. After considering various options, we decided to create the Ontario Institute for Education Leadership (IEL), a virtual organization formed in 2006 as a partnership among principal, supervisory and director associations with the ministry. The IEL is committed to exploring the work of leading-edge research in education leadership and applying that expertise to the development of high-quality resources and learning opportunities for school and system leaders to support student achievement.

Unlike other leadership organizations, such as the National College for Leaders of School and Children's Services (NCLSCS) in England, the IEL is not a "bricks and mortar" institution with a permanent staff and annual government funding. In contrast, the work of the IEL is a voluntary commitment by the key professional leadership associations to work together in a way they haven't in the past to ensure a tri-level (province, district and school) agreement on the effective implementation of the OLS. The access to and credibility that these practitioners have in the field has allowed them to promote the Strategy among their colleagues across the province and to demonstrate the practical implementation of improved leadership to support improved student outcomes.

A consultation process was put in motion to gather opinion from teachers, school and system leaders and academia on the way forward for leadership development. In 2008, the ministry reported back to stakeholders on "What We Heard" and subsequently developed the first articulation of the Ontario Leadership Strategy (Ontario Ministry of Education 2008d). Minster of Education, Kathleen Wynne and Premier Dalton McGuinty launched the Strategy in September 2008, showing the importance the government gave to it.

Consistent with the approaches behind the overall Ontario strategy, the theory of action behind the leadership strategy was that building on effective practices and networks already in place, engaging partners, aligning ministry initiatives, supporting both individual and organizational development, and communicating broadly,

would be the keys to better leadership development across the province aimed at improved outcomes for students. To support this theory of action, it was important to draw on evidence-based practice, focus leadership on student achievement and well-being, while fostering professional growth, and remove distractions to promote focus on the three key goals.

As one example, an on-going distraction for many principals has been the issue of job security. The ministry facilitated a consultation process with school and system leaders associations to talk about terms and conditions for principals and vice-principals with their employers. The consultation process resulted in an effective practices guide agreed to by all parties. The ministry is monitoring the implementation of the guideline to determine whether stronger measures for compliance are needed. Progress on this goal has allowed principals and their organizations to sharpen their attention to student outcomes and learning issues.

Main Elements of the Ontario Leadership Strategy

In the first year of the implementation of the Strategy, a number of on-going activities were strengthened and continued, building on good practice and networks in place and supporting both individual and organizational development:

- The pilots in mentoring and appraisal were expanded with funding and resources to allow all schools and districts to participate.
- The Ontario Leadership Framework was promoted and supported throughout the province by the Institute for Education Leadership. The IEL designed and funded workshops for school and system leaders across the province and invited districts to send teams to learn about the OLF. As well, members of the IEL who were providers of the mandated qualification programme for principals integrated the framework into their programmes.
- The LNS' focus on development, implementation and monitoring of district and school improvement plans was strengthened by the development of the School Effectiveness Framework, a tool for school assessments along with funds to appoint a School Effectiveness Lead in each district. This Lead is a principal or superintendent who assists principals in leading an annual school self-assessment team and process and facilitates a number of district school reviews.
- Executive development programmes focused on change management for system leaders, supported by the ministry and run by a not-for profit organization, in partnership with a business school at a local university, continued to serve new cohorts of supervisory officers and directors from across the province.
- New initiatives in this first year were launched to sharpen focus on the improvement agenda; for example, building leadership to close achievement gaps, removing distracters and attracting the right people to the role of principal.

With respect to closing achievement gaps, two key initiatives were launched:

- The Premier's "Leader-to-Leader" initiative brought together 11 principals from struggling schools with 11 principals from schools that had overcome difficult circumstances to share effective practices. This initiative reflects the personal commitment of Ontario's Premier to leadership development and his desire to emphasize the "no excuses" approach to leading struggling schools.
- The Principal Congress (see Chap. 20) invited 250 principals and district leaders together with senior ministry staff to discuss the leadership needed to close achievement gaps. A key finding in the report is that the collective wisdom of principal participants at the Congress matches well with the research available on the leadership needed to close achievement gaps. This activity is a good example of the work fostered by the Ministry's research strategy which was developed to ensure that we develop and implement policies, programmes and practices that are evidence-based, research-informed, and connected to provincial education goals.

In 2009–2010, the second year of the Strategy, every school district is required to have a succession and talent development plan in place as part of a focus on organizational development to support individual development. The ministry, with input from across branches and associations, developed a continuum of effective practices for talent development and succession planning for districts along with targeted funding to guide the development of district plans. The IEL supported this by expanding their website to highlight district best practices and resources around succession planning as well as publishing research which looked at the underlying factors affecting districts' ability to ensure a pool of skilled and passionate leaders ready to take on the role.

To strengthen communication of, and engagement in, the OLS, two leadership publications have been launched: *In Conversation* is a discussion paper for school leaders distributed by the Deputy Minister three times each school year through posting on the ministry's leadership website[1]. These papers are designed to stimulate discussion and reflection among school and system leaders across the province. A second publication is *Ideas into Action: From Research to Policy to Effective Practice*[2] which provides research insights and practical strategies for school and system leaders that are aligned with the Ontario Leadership Strategy and Framework.

In the third year of the Strategy (2010–2011), all districts will be expected to have a leadership development strategy in place encompassing the initiatives of the previous 2 years and incorporated into their district strategic plans. Expectations for the content of these strategies will be provided to districts and will include but not be limited to:

- Strategies to ensure that mentoring, appraisal, succession planning and talent development are embedded in the district's overall plan
- Measures to track the impact of the district's leadership activities related to the goals of the OLS

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[1] (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/InConversation).

[2] (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/IdeasIntoAction).

Aligning the OLS with the Overall Education Strategy

To ensure that the OLS aligns with the core priorities of the government and is broadly embraced across all ministry activities, the ministry established a Leadership Implementation Team (LIT) made up of senior management staff in the ministry along with Ben Levin and Kenneth Leithwood, OISE/UT, as advisors. This team meets three times annually to support and guide the implementation of the OLS and thereby help ensure that the vision of fostering leadership of the highest possible quality in schools and school districts across the province is realized. The fundamental responsibilities of the Leadership Implementation Team are to:

- Identify opportunities and strengthen alignment of leadership initiatives across the ministry;
- Ensure that leadership strategies are connected to best evidence research;
- Report on progress, discuss the impact of aligned leadership on ministry goals, and recommend future directions; and
- Drive deep implementation of effective leadership to achieve results.

Essentially, the LIT must "hold our feet to the fire" on leadership development to deliver on the vision for the OLS with a focus on its impact on student outcomes. In the spring of 2009, the LIT agreed that the OLF continues to be the basis for leadership development and to focus on five Core Leadership Capacities (CLCs) derived from the OLF – setting goals, aligning resources with priorities, promoting collaborative learning cultures, using data, and engaging in courageous conversations.

There was agreement across the team that making progress in these five areas would support effective implementation of a number of key initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategy, the school success strategy for secondary schools, the student assessment and evaluation strategy and so on. Focusing on five core areas would also bring clear ministry professional learning priorities to the multiple dimensions and attributes that are in the OLF.

The CLCs will be embedded in all provincially sponsored professional learning and resources for school and system leaders beginning in the 2009–2010 school year and will ensure that capacity building activities associated with all ministry initiatives are aligned consistently around these five core capacities. For example, the leadership attributes are now clearly connected to the provincial School Effectiveness Framework, which is the main vehicle used for school and district improvement planning.

Leadership on the Ground

The examples below are drawn from schools and districts to illustrate what the implementation of the OLS looks like on the ground. As noted already, the OLS outlines goals and overall strategies, but Ontario respects different approaches by

districts and schools provided that these are goal-focused and are assessed for effectiveness.

1. An elementary school whose principal took specific, strategic steps to improve student achievement;
2. A coaching model for struggling secondary schools;
3. A district that has a comprehensive talent development plan in place to ensure good leadership is being nurtured at all levels; and
4. A learning network among directors of districts who are reflecting on what it takes to move a whole district forward to improve student achievement.

An Elementary School Principal's Instructional Leadership Approach

The ministry's LNS provides assistance to selected schools as part of its Ontario Focussed Intervention Project (OFIP). Schools were identified for involvement in this project when less than one-third of students were achieving at the desired levels 3 or 4 in reading (as measured by provincial assessments). Student Achievement Officers from the LNS supported the principal and staff in the school over a 2-year period, facilitating professional learning community discussions about student data and work, sharing evidence-based successful teaching strategies, assisting the principal in bringing about school and classroom changes for improved teaching and learning.

One such school in south-western Ontario serves as an excellent example of the role of leadership in effecting change. This particular school was selected for intervention and support as only 14% of its students were achieving at least level 3 in the provincial assessments. The demographic data for the school indicated that its students faced many challenges to their success: approximately 40% of the students in the school changed in any given year, over 60% lived in poverty, and many were recent immigrants who spoke a language other than English at home. The staff cared deeply about their students but this was not translating into the literacy skills.

The principal created the vision and led the change. The turnaround began with the principal engaging key teachers in leading a focus on improving literacy skills. She provided release time for teachers to engage in deep conversations about student work; she kept the focus, even when the first year's results were not as good as staff expected. She ensured that the transition was a "whole school" project, encouraging staff to stay engaged, challenging others to be involved, over time having both the happy and the difficult conversations required. The principal connected pairs and triads of staff to ensure that hesitant adapters had the assistance of key leaders among staff to help them use the resources well. Five years later, 58% of students achieved at least level 3 in the provincial assessments.

One teacher's response when asked about her developmental reading assessment of a young child who had just registered as a new student in grade two indicates the extent to which staff have responded to the vision of the principal, "When I have a

new student, I don't know if he will be with us for 3 weeks, 3 years or anytime in between. I can't waste a day without knowing his reading level and how to help him improve."

A Coaching Model for Struggling Secondary Schools

Secondary schools present a different set of challenges to leadership for school improvement (Levin 2008). In 2008, the ministry initiated a strategy called "Student Success School Support", a 2-year commitment to a few districts and schools who needed and wanted to improve student achievement, instruction and school programming in secondary schools. The initiative offers intense support to secondary schools where the indicator data show that a significant number of students are not earning credits and graduating. The strategy was introduced in 27 schools in 3 school districts and in 2009 it was expanded to 67 schools in 12 districts.

The focus of the initiative is to support the work of the principal as the instructional leader in the school, through use of a coaching model. The coach works with the principal as the principal leads, supports and monitors job embedded professional learning for all staff, to improve instruction for every student.

Each school principal is matched with an experienced administrator (a retired secondary school principal, trained in a collaborative coaching model) who acts as the principal's coach. Beyond awareness and demonstrated ability as a principal, the Student Success Strategy requires that each coach has qualifications and skills to build the capacity of the principal as an instructional leader that will result in improved outcomes for students. Modest additional financial resources are allocated to participating schools.

These school-based resources are primarily for staff release-time, job-embedded learning, professional development, and a targeted improvement strategy. The initiative has also created networks of support and learning both within the districts and with other principals/districts working in the initiative; for example, a website allows principals, coaches and School Support Student Success Leaders to connect and post items of interest.

It was initially difficult for some of the principals to "carve out" time to meet with the coach and to focus on instructional issues. Operational matters were often more pressing, particularly in schools where matters of student safety were foremost. As well, for some principals the concept of coaching was not seen in a wholly positive light. There was an implication that there is "something wrong with me". In responding to these challenges, coaches were urged to focus their conversations on instructional leadership and not get drawn into other aspects of the role. As well, the ministry team and the coaches assured principals that schools were identified for the programme by student achievement data, not on the abilities of the principal. This was a subtle distinction for some and made it more difficult for them to engage fully in the programme but most gradually saw the value and benefited from the support.

In spite of these early difficulties, the strategy is valued for its focus on the principal as instructional leaders with the support and encouragement of someone who understands the role and has been trained to provide coaching support for transformational practice leading to improved student outcomes. Anecdotal feedback from coaches and principals is positive and data on student outcomes indicate improvements in students' achievement in participating schools.

A District's Talent Development and Succession Planning Approach

The Ottawa Catholic District School Board has demonstrated expertise and commitment in skilfully knitting together the plethora of leadership initiatives and supports coming from the ministry with their own local programmes. They support leaders in all employee groups within their district from custodians, to office administrators, educational assistants, teachers and school and system leaders. Their "Leadership Journey" programme is tailored to each of these groups and includes mentoring, induction and ongoing development. Opportunities are provided at every level for employees who may aspire to leadership to gain important experiences to guide their journey. For example, once a principal has been identified as "ready" to become a system leader, he or she may be invited to senior team meetings for a period of time leading up to the promotion, so that they are ready to assume the full duties of the position upon appointment. There is also strong evidence of synergy across the employee groups, for example, a new principal who is benefiting from having a mentor, works with an office administrator in the building who is also being mentored. They are able to reinforce their learning through mutual conversations.

The district director identifies their approach to leadership as holistic, and one in which succession planning is systematic, proactive and intentional. Learning opportunities are provided to promote self-actualization. As a result, this district has experienced no shortage of candidates for its leadership positions and is able to provide smooth and effective transitions into each leadership position available. In addition, there is strong evidence in this district that employees from all sectors feel valued and empowered to do their best work on behalf of students.

A Network of District Leaders Engaged in Reflective Practice

With support and funding from the IEL and expert advice from Ken Leithwood, a group of directors from a dozen districts in one region of the province have formed a network to share and reflect on effective senior leader practices. They are seeking clarification of the key dimensions of system level learning and development for district leaders consistent with the best available evidence, and then working to use those practices in their own districts. The group intends to propose a design for professional learning networks for senior leaders across the province.

Their discussions have focused on organizational structures for senior teams in districts, effective practice in the role of the director in supervising instruction, and best practice around setting agendas for working with their elected boards of trustees. The outcomes from this research project will significantly impact policy development for targeted supports for district leaders. Participants have indicated that this has been a highly relevant and effective process for discussing their roles that may not have been available to them in the past. It has caused them to review and revise some of their own approaches in their districts to better align with the core priority of student achievement.

Conclusion

Our experience reaffirms the importance of systematic, aligned leadership development as a vital part of an overall education improvement strategy. Over the last 6 years, we have learned that several factors are critical to success and these remain part of the developing theory of action for the OLS:

- *Support growth with a focus on results*. There is a natural tension between growth and results that needs constant attention. For example, in the appraisal model for principals that the ministry has developed, some stakeholders argue that the focus should be on principals' professional growth, but there is also a bottom line – what results are being achieved and what responsibilities does the principal have in delivering on these? Our strategy does not suggest that principals ought to be judged solely or even primarily on student outcomes, but we do put better outcomes, broadly defined, at the centre of everything we do and that we want schools to do.
- *Focus on a few key priorities*. Sticking to a few   priorities is a challenge as there is never a shortage of good ideas to implement. The Ontario strategy has had much success by having only three goals. The recent introduction of the five CLCs has provided a similar clear focus for leadership at the ministry level.
- *Pay attention to alignment across all levels*. It is easy for different branches of the ministry to become engrossed in their own initiatives and programmes, but the sector is looking for initiatives to be coordinated and aligned. Effective implementation of the OLS will depend on strong alignment at every stage demonstrated by consistent language, messaging and the building of synergy across the initiatives. Similarly, the strategy pushes districts to have internal alignment in their own initiatives.
- *Engage a broad range of partners*. Partners do not always agree with the ministry or even with each other. Partner organizations also have their own priorities which are not always consistent with the province's overall effort to improve student outcomes and public confidence. It is a challenge to keep partners engaged and on-side with ministry priorities and the more difficult this is, the more important it is to work at it. Respect for all parties and opportunities for constructive dialogue are essential.

- *Ensure evidence-based practice with commitment to respond to emerging research.* Conventional wisdom about leadership is not always consistent with the best available evidence. At the same time, a good theory of action for improved achievement needs to be open ended enough to respond to new research and evidence, particularly when anticipated results do not materialize.
- *Monitor for impact.* The OLS works in service to the overall goals of improved student outcomes and public confidence. It is important to develop indicators of success related to these goals and to develop mechanisms to check in on these indicators on a regular basis.

What Next?

There is a sense across the province that leadership development is finding its rightful place as a priority in the work of the ministry, districts and schools. The supports provided by the ministry are being well-received and districts are incorporating many of the initiatives into their district-wide implementation plans to support improved student outcomes. Principals' associations are engaging in partnership with the ministry in more meaningful ways as they sense a stronger support for the role through the implementation of the various elements of the OLS.

The ministry will collect and share effective practices across the province particularly in the area of succession planning and talent development as districts increase their attention to this area with funding provided by the ministry.

It would be easy to make the mistake of becoming complacent about the success of leadership initiatives underway or complete, or to move on to new and exciting initiatives. Instead, it will be important to do reality checks. Beyond the positive response from stakeholders to early implementation, is the OLS actually making a difference?

The next critical step for the ministry is to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for the Leadership Strategy; one that looks for tangible, concrete evidence of success that can be expected to impact student outcomes positively. The plan will help to ensure that the positive responses to the OLS noted after 1 year lead to sustainable improvement in leadership across the province and it will identify those areas that need to be revisited or strengthened to continue to support the government's overall agenda. Chap. 20 represents some of our learning to date.

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Chapter 35
Building Leadership Capacity: The Norwegian Approach

Jorunn Møller and Eli Ottesen

Introduction: School Leadership Preparation in the Context of Norway

Until the early 1990s, no formal education for school leaders was offered by Norwegian university colleges and universities. However, since the early 1970s national and regional authorities have encouraged in-service training. In the period from 1980 to 2000, such efforts were supported by broad national in-service programmes for school leadership. During that period, the dominant teacher unions strongly contested the need for formal, university-based preparation programmes for school leaders. According to them, earlier experience as a teacher was a sufficient and a substantial qualification condition for a position as principal. Furthermore, the unions argued for keeping this option of a career path for teachers (Tjeldvoll et al. 2005; Møller and Schratz 2008). At the start of the new millennium, however, the situation changed completely, and now the unions were arguing for formal education programmes in leadership and management. In addition, several universities and colleges began to offer master programmes incorporating educational leadership.

This change of view is related to the role of transnational policy-making agencies and the impact of international assessment systems (e.g., PISA, PIRLS, TIMSS[1]). Over the last decades educational policy and reforms in the public sector in general have raised expectations of schools, especially concerning schools' output, and principals are challenged to respond to these concerns. PISA findings have received huge attention in Norway because of the relatively low international ranking seen in relation to high financial investment in education. Performance measurement and accountability are now in the forefront of educational policy (Elstad 2008; Møller 2009).

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[1] Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

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New national evaluation procedures have been introduced to produce data as to the level of student achievement. While teachers long have been trusted to do a good job, other stakeholders now want to define educational quality and ask for more external regulation of teachers' work. New strategies for reinventing government by establishing New Public Management (NPM) both at the central and the municipal level have emerged. It is argued that introducing New Public Management has been motivated by concerns about reducing disparities in educational outcomes across different social groups. Therefore it is argued, strengthening of state responsibility in terms of monitoring offers an instrument for efficient service production, governed by a performance-oriented culture with a focus on results and efficiency (Olsen 2002). Both arguments are closely connected to a practice of holding schools accountable for outcomes which meet the predefined criteria, and the reason why leadership has become a main focus in education policy recently. As such, one may say that Norwegian education policy is changing (Tjeldvoll 2008).

Local municipalities and counties have played, and still play, a strong role in school governance. Leadership responsibility at municipal and county level is shared between professional administrators and elected politicians. Through this linkage, education is connected to broader community affairs. Today municipalities are portrayed as 'the owners' of the majority of schools; they finance their schools and they employ teachers. They also play a key role in providing in-service training for teachers and school leaders. In most municipalities teachers still enjoy considerable trust and autonomy, and in practice relationships are not very hierarchical. A more recent feature, as a consequence of the restructuring of municipal governing of schools, is that many principals today coordinate various functions that earlier were taken care of at municipal level. This is a new arrangement recommended by the OECD, described as 'system leadership', but it has both 'gains and strains' (Hopkins 2007; Pont et al. 2008). The advantage is that the principals distribute their leadership energies, experiences and knowledge between their own schools and other stakeholders. In Norway one might ask whether this move has meant increased responsibility combined with decreased authority in a context in which there are often insufficient resources. One might also ask if the implementation of New Public Management at municipal level has resulted in less time and attention for providing leadership for improved teaching and learning.

At present Norway does not have a mandatory requirement for any leadership qualification, but influenced by the international OECD project *Improving School Leadership*, the Norwegian Minister of Education and Research launched a national education programme for newly appointed school principals in 2009. Through this programme, the authorities want to make their expectations about principals' roles and responsibilities more explicit. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has developed a framework and set out the objectives and priorities for the programme. It took as its point of departure the challenges facing the schools. Five main themes that identify key competencies for principals, specified in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, were outlined. The overall aims are to develop a deep understanding of the leadership role in education; to develop confidence in the role as educational leader; and to develop courage and strength in leadership.

In 2009 universities and university colleges were invited to send in a bid, and so far four higher education institutions have been accepted as providers.

This chapter aims to consider how leadership development and preparation is conceptualised and contextualised in the new national education programme for newly appointed school principals in Norway. The starting point for our analysis is that educational leadership is ultimately concerned with learning, and our theoretical frame is informed by a review of a number of studies which focus on the relationship between leadership and student learning, and by Michael Fullan's (2001) framework for thinking about and leading complex change. Fullan's framework represents a convergence of theories about leadership, and it consists of five components of leadership which correspond to independent but mutual reinforcing forces for positive change (Fullan's 2001, p. 3). As the empirical basis for this article we have selected two preparation programmes which have been granted a status as a national leadership programme in Norway, and which also demonstrates various ways of understanding leadership for school improvement and student learning. We will explore differences and similarities between these two and discuss implications of possible different definitions and practices. We will, in particular, discuss the differing epistemological foundations of the two different approaches to the learning of school leadership.

School Leadership and Student Learning

The concept of leadership is closely related to a family of terms such as authority, influence and power (Gronn 2002). It implies that leadership involves a careful interplay of knowledge and action, and an awareness of conditions, relations and change. Learning-focused leadership is not limited to the domain of student learning. It also includes the capacity building necessary for professionals in the school, and represents a form of organisational learning that can feed into the context for student learning (Knapp et al. 2003; MacBeath et al. 2009).

Currently there is great interest in the links between leadership and student learning and outcomes, in particular ways in which principals can influence student performance. The reformers' belief in the capacity of school principals to make a difference to student outcomes is supported by qualitative research on the impact of leadership on successful schools (Day and Leithwood 2007). Based on a comprehensive review of the literature on successful school leadership, Leithwood and Riehl (2005) argued that almost all successful leaders drew on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices, and these practices included (a) setting direction, (b) developing people, (c) redesigning the organisation, and (d) managing the instructional program. Leadership was defined as 'those persons, occupying various roles in the school, who work with others to provide direction and who exert influence on persons and things in order to achieve the school's goals' (Leithwood and Riehl 2005, p. 9). Furthermore, it was emphasised that school leaders improved teaching and learning indirectly, and most powerfully, through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions.

Based on an analysis of findings from 27 published studies of the relationship between leadership and student outcomes, Robinson et al. (2008) argued that the more leaders focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater their influence is on student outcomes. However, increased leadership of this type could be counterproductive if it was exercised without reference to knowledge about which particular qualities of teacher professional development have an effect on the students of the participating teachers. The purpose of this study was to examine the relative impact of different types of leadership on students' academic and non-academic outcomes. The meta-analysis revealed strong average effects for a leadership dimension involving promoting and participating in teacher learning and development, and moderate effects for the dimensions concerned with goal setting and planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum.

Drawing from findings from a large and extensive study of contemporary leadership in England to date, Day et al. (2009) confirmed the model of successful leadership practices identified in Leithwood and Riehl's (2005) literature review, but also went beyond this. The study focused on schools that have significantly raised pupil attainment levels over a 3-year period (2003–2005). While they could not identify a single model of the practice of effective leadership, it was possible to identify a common repertoire of broad educational values, personal and interpersonal qualities, competencies, decision-making processes and a range of strategic actions which all the effective principals in the study possessed and used. A key argument was that school leaders were '*successful in improving pupil outcomes through who they are – their values, virtues dispositions, attributes and competences – the strategies they use, and the specific combination and timely implementation and management of these strategies in response to the unique contexts in which they work*' (Day et al. 2009, p. 195). It was the combination of strategies based upon their diagnoses and understanding of individuals, the needs of schools at different phases of development, and national policy imperatives which were influential in promoting improved student outcomes.

As demonstrated above, school leadership is claimed to be of great importance for student achievement, and several countries including Norway have initiated leadership programmes to improve leadership skills of school principals. However, current research has little to offer about how leadership training may foster a productive learning environment. An important step is thus to identify how preparation programmes are conceptualised and contextualised, and the Norwegian case may serve as an example.

A Framework for Thinking About Leadership and Leading in a Culture of Change

There is a growing critique of existing leadership research which has an exaggerated view of human agency and cause–effect relations. This is probably the reason why a perspective on leadership as distributed, or shared, is gaining terrain.

Many studies now claim that if schools are to develop their organisational capacity, both teachers and students need to be encouraged to exercise leadership (Furman and Starratt 2002; Spillane 2006).

However, a preparation programme for school leaders will nevertheless need to qualify and enable individuals to develop their leadership capacities. In turn, this requires a conceptual template for understanding professional and personal career trajectories and a framework for thinking about leadership which can serve as a basis for the construction of preparation and education programmes for school leaders. After all, the core activity in a school is student learning, and the starting point for our analysis is that educational leadership is ultimately concerned with learning. Leadership and learning are understood as mutually embedded; a frame which pictures both leading and learning as activities and, as such, offers an open invitation to lead and to learn as the task or the circumstance demands (MacBeath et al. 2009). In addition, we have in our analysis also chosen to apply Fullan's (2001) framework for thinking about leadership. He draws on current ideas and theories on the topic of effective leadership, and his main argument is that everyone can improve their leadership by focusing on a small number of key dimensions. It is about 'developing a new mind-set about the leader's responsibility to himself or herself and to those with whom he or she works.' (Fullan's 2001, p. 2). The framework consists of five core aspects of leadership; i.e. attending to a broader moral purpose which is concerned with direction and results; understanding change which includes perspectives on the complexities of the change process; cultivating relationships with diverse people and groups to avoid easy consensus; knowledge creation and sharing to honour the complexity; and coherence making to extract valuable patterns which are worthwhile to retain. In addition, some personal characteristics are included in this framework. These are labelled energy, enthusiasm and hopefulness, and there is a reciprocal relationship between the two sets.

A National Programme for the Preparation and Development of School Leaders

In a White Paper titled 'Quality in schools' (Report No. 31 2007/2008), the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Education and Research stated that they would establish educational programmes for principals. Their aim was to make the political expectations and demands of leadership in schools explicit by regulating the contents of the programmes. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training subsequently constructed a tender defining the frames and content, and higher education institutions were invited to submit bids.

In the tender, the Directorate formulated requirements for the proposed programmes. The 30-credit Master's level programmes were to deal with current challenges, and the target group was to be newly appointed principals. While an institution of higher education had to be responsible, programmes offered ought to be a joint venture between at least two institutions, one of which was not to be a teacher education institution. In a supplement to the tender, these expectations and

demands were further elaborated. The Directorate identified four main areas for a principal's competence: (1) The students' learning outcomes and learning environment, (2) governing and administration, (3) cooperation and organisational development, counselling of teachers, and (4) development and change. The programmes, it was said, should address the roles of leaders, enabling participating principals to develop into democratic, confident and courageous leaders in their schools. Furthermore, providers were expected to collaborate closely with local educational authorities in delivering the programme.

Four bids for leadership preparation programmes were accepted: The University of Bergen (UiB), the University of Oslo (UiO), The Norwegian School of Management (BI) and The Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (AFF). We have analysed all four programmes with a focus on their perspectives regarding leadership, their choice of content, the proposed organisation and work methods. This preliminary analysis shows that all four programmes attended to the framework presented in the tender. In particular, the content (themes to be worked with) met the Directorate's requirements. Next, all four aimed to make use of the principals' practical experiences, for example, in coursework and written assignments, with an emphasis on the importance of facilitating the principals' understanding and development of their roles as leaders. Despite this, the four programmes offer distinct responses to the charted framework. There are differences in their perspectives on leadership and in the way they understand the principal's role, and as a consequence, in the ways in which they frame the content areas. As an example we have chosen the BI and the UiB programmes for closer analysis. The rationale for our selection is that these two institutions represent distinctive views of leadership for learning, and they are also grounded in different research traditions. As such they may exemplify different ways of interpreting the national framework. BI is well recognised for its research on leadership and management in and for private and public sectors, while UiB is anchored in educational theories and highlights research in education and learning as a key component in providing the ability to understand and address the emerging challenges of our knowledge-based society. Such theoretical underpinnings have laid the groundwork for more recent interdisciplinary research on leadership of educational institutions, and knowledge management within both private and public sector institutions at UiB with partners.

Two Norwegian Programmes for Leadership Preparation and Training

The programme from *The Norwegian School of Management (BI)* draws on their experience as providers of leadership education and training, in their general management courses as well as in courses for educational leaders. BI stands out strongly as an able and responsible provider, and the different content areas are strengthened through their research activities and expertise of their partners.

In addition, BI emphasises extensive cooperation with municipalities in developing and delivering education and training for school leaders, where the main task for principals is to improve students' outcomes. To cope with this challenge, principals need to adopt an integrated approach in their work, and need not be too narrowly focused on educational leadership.

Thus, in BI's *perspective on school leadership*, general leadership skills are accentuated because principals need to master a range of such skills. On the one hand, they are educational leaders and administrators, and on the other they are employers and managers responsible for the organisation's results. Variation in efficiency can (partly) be explained by personality and conduct, while the programme aims to develop visionary and relational leaders with the skills that are needed to develop an organisation capable of delivering education for all in accordance with national and local policies.

The *central subject areas* in BI's programme are: economics of education, school effectiveness and efficiency, governance and change, leadership and resource management, learning and learning theories. In addition to the four thematic courses, the programme is to offer leadership *training* in communication and the management of power and influence. The programme has a strong focus on managerial aspects of school leadership, and on the principal's role as executive of governing policies aiming to strengthen output. Democracy is seen as an aspect of this: it means to work loyally within the governing system, and to be able to delegate power and authority when appropriate. The programme highlights the need for a critical stance in the development of new leadership roles as a consequence of society's changing expectations. Legal and management aspects of leadership are central, but so are student learning (input and outcomes) and organisational learning.

In contrast, in the programme offered by *The University of Bergen (UiB),* student learning is centre stage, and in particular, the challenge of planning and carrying out teaching to better meet the needs of the individual student. To reach the ambitious goals of the recent reform, it is stated, principals will need focus on developing schools as a learning organisations and to facilitate the development of strong teacher professionalism. Learning to use assessment tools and developing an understanding of inclusive education and learning as a core activity are important aspects of their leadership capacity building. The programme bears evidence of being a joint application from five universities and university colleges in the Western region of Norway, in addition to cooperation with a private consultancy business.

In their *perspective on school leadership*, the connection between theory and practice is emphasised. Skills and knowledge necessary for a school leader are described as being both about leadership in general, but also about knowledge and skills necessary to realise the mandate and purpose of schooling. In addition dialogue, cooperation, the management of tensions, conflicts and emotions are described as areas crucial to school leadership skills, while values and dispositions such as equity, trust, respect and tolerance are also put into focus.

The *central subject areas* in UiB's programme are: Students' learning outcomes and learning environment; governance and administration; cooperation and development of the organisation; development and change; and the leadership role.

The overall aims and understandings described in the perspective on school leadership are more blurred within the subject areas. However, aspects associated with the school as a learning organisation, accountability and measurements connected to learning outcomes and the quality of teaching are prominent, even though the approaches and theories vary across subject areas.

Discussion

Perspective on Leadership

The Norwegian School of Management (BI) sums up their understanding of leadership in schools in two short sections. First, they state that schools are complex organisations. This, they argue, is a result of increased influence of interest groups within and around the school. Thus, the principal is in a squeeze between multitudes of expectations, some related to issues concerning teaching and learning, and others related to general management issues. In particular, principals at present are held accountable for student outcomes. Due to the increased complexity of leadership in schools, there are no 'quick fixes' or easy roads to effective leadership.

BI refers to studies (these are not referenced) about leadership and efficiency, and argues that around 50% of the variation in leadership efficiency can be explained by the leaders' personality and actions. Thus, developmental, visionary and relation-oriented leadership has been seen to yield stable results. This may suggest that people in the organisation need to develop a sense of competency, self-efficacy and belonging. It is argued that what is really needed is time for deep thought and reflection in order to understand the differing aspects of leadership.

It is the focus on learning outcomes that is most prominent in BI's programme, and the main competence for a school leader is described as the ability to choose ways in which the school needs to work with the core issues of learning. For this to affect the whole organisation, the leader needs to influence school staff by alternating between measures that are organisational and pedagogical.

Turning to the University of Bergen (UiB), they see leadership for learning, both among students and staff as the key challenge for principals. To work with this challenge, principals first of all need to develop competence in the use of evaluation and information about outcomes in order to plan and promote teaching and learning, and second, to develop inclusivity so as to avoid marginalisation and social inequality. Thus, it is the school's core activity, teaching and learning, that is placed centre stage in their programme. Important issues to be addressed are, for example, principals' endeavours to develop schools as learning organisations, how to strengthen teacher professionalism, how to develop fruitful dialogues between actors at different levels and between schools and their local environment.

UiB acknowledges that leadership in schools should be studied along two dimensions. The first is general leadership theory, which can help principals understand

and develop their practice. The second, leadership in schools, is closely related to the formal mission and mandate of schools, the content of schooling, methods and forms of practice. Thus, principals need knowledge about the work of teachers and students in order to deal with educational and pedagogic issues. In their programme, UiB seeks to integrate these two aspects in order to develop capacity for action, based on what are considered as unique dimensions of *school leadership*. According to UiB, capacity for school leadership builds on:

- an outward focus, i.e. knowledge about national policy, global issues
- an inward focus, i.e. how to lead and ensure sustainable learning and development in the school organisation
- a comprehensive view of educational knowledge to enable the principal to act as instructional leader and mentor
- knowledge about how to develop as a leader continuously

In sum, BI applies leadership concepts developed in other organisational contexts, for example, knowledge management and change leadership based on empirical studies of corporations and educational organisations, while UiB to a larger extent draws on research based on studies of leadership in educational organisations.

Understanding Leadership for Change

We can identify both similarities and differences when we compare the BI and the UiB programmes. Both underscore the fact that schools are complex organisations and that there are no quick fixes to school improvement. Both also attend closely to the framework outlined by the National Directorate of Education and Training. The main difference between them is related to which coordinating principle seems most prominent; a top-down understanding of leadership or a bottom-up perspective. BI is concerned with principals being held accountable for student outcomes; developing effective skills for working on this core issue is therefore highlighted. This is basically a top-down strategy for implementation of educational policy where national and municipal authorities define the premises. The principal is held accountable for implementing the policy.

UiB has a stronger focus on leadership for learning, both among students and among staff; teaching and learning in a multicultural environment is placed centre stage in their programme. They emphasise educational processes, and leadership as distributed in the organisation is an implicit aspect, along with a commitment to bottom-up processes for school improvement. Development and change is one of four thematic areas addressed in UiB's programme. Their point of departure is that principals need to understand the complexity of educational institutions, a complexity that makes processes of development and change especially challenging. Change in schools is mandated through educational reforms, inducing the school leader to deal with more or less explicit expectations. Thus, to be able to interpret and understand policies and expectations is important. However, it is seen as equally

important to establish a culture and organisational structure that will accommodate change, always keeping in mind the improved learning of pupils. Such structures need to build on and exploit cooperation and dialogue with actors within and outside of the school.

Another distinction is that while UiB highlights some unique dimensions of school leadership as key aspects in the programme and adds to it a more generalised view of leadership, for BI a generalised view of leadership has to be in the fore-ground, with unique dimensions of leading the school as an organisation playing a less prominent role.

Attending to the School's Moral Purpose

The BI programme intends to help school leaders build a robust understanding of the school's role and mandate, and to become committed to delivering just, mean-ingful and high-quality education. This resembles Fullan's description of a moral purpose. However, there is a crucial difference. While we understand Fullan's con-cept of moral purpose in a wide sense, as a state of attentiveness to the lives and well being of people as well as the outcomes, BI's programme puts outcomes first. Their view is that by being concerned about school results and learning how to use results for improvement, the moral purpose of just and meaningful education will be attended to.

In BI's programme much space is devoted to issues related to change. Reforms in the public sectors are compared and discussed in order to build an *understanding* of what it means for leadership in schools when reforms more and more resemble other public sector reforms. Furthermore they focus on the relationships between levels, in particular between schools and local education authorities. By improving school leaders' understanding of the school system, they expect them to be better equipped to implement national and local policies and to influence the processes which have led to the formulation of such policies. A central issue related to change is how to initiate and follow up change processes. BI puts emphasis on change for efficiency – with an explicit focus on results. In their programme, BI proposes to train the school leaders to better understand the economy of education so that they are able to develop strategies for change that will improve results. Such strategies need to include clear aims and requirements, and to ensure that the staff's and leader's freedom of action are employed in a way that enhances outcomes.

In UiB's programme quality work is an issue of uttermost priority that needs to be addressed at all levels in the educational system. While the programme has a strong focus on outcomes and learning environments, as well as on the school's mission and mandate, they argue that it is what goes on in classrooms that consti-tute the main points of interest. Thus, the *moral purpose* of school leadership is to work *with* pupils, staff and other stakeholders to improve the quality of teaching. This involves attending to outcomes, while at the same time keeping focus on learning processes in classrooms and in the organisation. Fullan argues that moral purpose

both is about ends and means (Fullan 2001, p. 13). Similarly, UiB's programme frames quality as a question of both establishing fruitful dialogue between actors at all levels, and about creating organisational structures that will support such dialogue.

Cultivating Relationship and Knowledge Sharing

Building capacity for change in schools includes aspects of individual development and of establishing organisational support structures that accommodate continually developing relationships (Hopkins 2007). Fullan (2001, p. 44) sees cultural change as the main issue for change in education. In BI's programme cultural change is discussed within a Human Resource framework. The idea is to highlight HR as an important strategic area in the organisation, to make sure that HR and the organisation's overall strategy pull in the same direction, and to develop the students' understanding of human resource management as a crucial competence in order to exploit fully the organisation's human capital to achieve good results.

In addition, HR is seen as the entry point for the development of 'human capital improvement', involvement and social climate. This touches on Fullan's dimension of *relationship building*. However, BI's programme does not explicitly deal with interpersonal relationships, building professional learning communities, or paying attention to the interactions between actors in the organisation. While Fullan focuses on relationships as mutual, arguing that an important aspect of leadership is to listen to the diverse voices of members of the organisation, BI is more concerned about the leader learning to know him or herself as a leader in order to gain a better position from which to influence others. Thus, through leadership training, the programme aims to help the school leaders to develop their relational and communicative skills, to be able to achieve goals and make decisions in cooperation with others. To understand how trust may be established and sustained is, according to BI, of existential significance for leadership. Good communicative skills are a prerequisite for trust, and trust is necessary in order to exert power in democratic organisations.

In the module in BI's programme called 'Learning and Learning Theory', a central aim is to develop the students' competence in analysing and interpreting data about their school. Only when a school leader has this competence, will he or she be able to make use of methods that include the staff in the critical interpretation of results, and promote legitimate needs for improvement. The collective processes are not as Fullan advocates, primarily a means *for knowledge creation and sharing*, but *a tool* for the principal to build support for change. In their programme description, BI repeatedly uses the notions 'the school's learning environment' and 'the school's learning practice'. In its wider sense, the notions may be interpreted as pertaining to both staff and pupils' learning. By knowing about learning and learning theory, school leaders develop capacity to lead learning processes in a way that make processes challenging and democratic, bringing forth the best in the staff and

avoiding destructive processes. However, such processes need to focus on improving outcomes. While a principal cannot personally act as a coach for every teacher, he or she must learn how to choose the appropriate educational direction for the school, and how to design the organisation and make relevant priorities to support the staff. To do this, school leaders need also to be knowledgeable about the ways in which the staff members work with the core learning processes.

Throughout the UiB programme, there is a focus on dialogue, cooperation and collective learning processes. It adopts a network perspective on organisations, where knowledge and competence are seen as distributed among actors, thus making positive relationships essential. Such relationships have a potential to release creativity and productive learning processes at all levels in the organisation. However, creativity also means being able to take risks, and school leaders need to support audacious efforts directed at improvement, and arrange for open and collective evaluations to determine what works. UiB's programme has a strong focus on the school leader's responsibility to continuously build professional competence in the school's staff. He or she needs to build organisational structures to accommodate the staff's need for formal further education, and for informal in-service training and collaboration. In addition, UiB also emphasises the need for school leaders to function as mentors for their staff in their daily work.

As indicated above, UiB's programme has a strong focus on learning, and a specific focus on collective dimensions. The diversity of a network organisation can be fruitful, but also be extremely challenging. Thus, *knowledge creation and sharing* inevitably brings controversies and opposing views to the surface. Coaching and feedback on leadership skills can help build the confidence needed to tackle differences. A striking characteristic of the UiB programme is that it displays confidence in leaders and staff throughout. It is through dialogues and collective learning processes that controversies are to be settled, ambitions raised and responsible practices established. The common (or moral) purpose, to work *together* to develop and sustain practices and environment that are conducive to pupils' learning is what constitutes the integrative momentum in UiB's programme. Coherence is established by placing educational work with subject pedagogic issues centre stage.

How Are the Leadership Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions to be Developed?

BI describes their approach to education as 'bi-lingual' (p. 21). This gives further emphasis to their programme as both research-based and practical, this is, academically robust, and of practical use for leaders in schools. They use problem-based learning as one key approach, in which they work with authentic and relevant practical problems in lectures, plenary discussions and in groups. During the course, groups of principals are to work on a project assignment where they use theory to reflect, analyse, synthesise and assess practical issues taken from their own practice. Through this experience-based approach, theory is to be integrated with experience.

Furthermore, BI expects school leaders to write an essay designed to help them in their personal reflection on experience and to build insight and understanding. Theoretical themes that are explored in lectures and discussions are then transformed into practical training exercises.

UiB also uses a practice- and problem-based approach to learning and development. At the start of the programme, each school leader is expected to design a development project to be worked on in their schools. Throughout the programme, participants work with problems and issues of relevance in their projects, and the programme's literature and lectures, as well as feedback through coaching and group discussions, is intended to inform their practical work. In addition, school leaders are expected to work with written texts in order to stimulate reflection, develop argumentative power, and, as a consequence, advance their capacity for action. The programme is organised in monthly 2-day gatherings over a period one and half years. In each seminar, activities will alternate between research-based lectures, dialogues for reflection, and practical training. Moreover, course members are to be organised in network groups to share and reflect on experiences.

As shown above, there are more similarities than differences when it comes to the design of learning experiences for the participants. Both institutions claim that they have a research-based approach and offer a robust academic programme. Both include and build on participants' experiences as vital resources, and both focus on reflection on action. The differences are more implicit than explicit and relate to choice of literature and references. While UiB puts educational theories at the forefront, BI to a larger degree refers to leadership literature which claims to cover all kinds of organisations.

Summing Up the Main Differences

The most striking difference across these two programmes is the role of outcomes as a driving force for development. In BI's programme successful leadership is seen as reliant on evidence of outcomes or effects. Leadership is defined chiefly in terms of its outcomes, and efforts to understand relationships between leadership and the effects of leadership easily end up as circular arguments. This makes knowledge about communication and motivation a unilateral tool for the leader. The three modules and the leadership training element in BI's programme converge on a single purpose: to develop the principals' capacity to lead their organisations towards improved student outcomes. *Coherence making* (Fullan 2001) is organised around this purpose, and is to be achieved by building a wide and general knowledge base: understanding the school's role and mandate in society, its role and function within a governing system, the school's contribution to development in society, social as well as economic, the school as an organisation, and school leaders' relationships to the people in the organisation (BI's programme description, p. 7). However, the knowledge that school leaders develop in the programme is action oriented. Their ambition is to supply principals with conceptual and practical

tools that will help them lead and develop the organisation and stimulate and develop staff in alignment with national policies, with the student's improved learning outcomes as the aim.

UiB's programme, however, offers to a larger extent a framework or a tool for thinking about and analysing leadership. In their framework leadership refers to activities tied to the core work of the organisation, teaching and learning. Leadership is seen as being about influencing motivation, knowledge, emotion, or the practices of other organisational members concerning the core work of the school. Dialogue, teacher professionalism and developing a culture for change are foregrounded. Developing inclusive schools, in order to avoid marginalisation and social inequality, plays a dominant role in their description of the moral purpose of the school.

UiB strongly emphasises a collective approach. Through the programme, the principal, it is argued, should develop capacity to facilitate learning processes that build on the distributed expertise of the staff, and are directed towards improving student's learning. BI's programme, on the other hand, has its focus on the principals' role in implementing national and local policies. In this approach, leadership for learning is a question of strategically managing human resources so that policy requirements can be attained.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to explore how leadership development and preparation is conceptualised and contextualised in the national education programme for newly appointed school principals in Norway. A textual analysis of two different preparatory programmes, which both offer responses to the charted national framework, has been carried out.

We have identified some significant differences across providers. First, one institution underlines some unique dimensions of school leadership as key aspects in the programme and adds on a more generalised view of leadership. At the other institution, however, it is the other way around. Second, while one emphasises educational processes and the need for encouraging bottom-up approaches to school improvement, the other adopts a more top-down perspective. Third, the most striking difference is the emphasis placed on outcomes. One institution frames information about student outcomes as a tool for dialogue within the organisation, and to promote a collective approach to setting a direction while the other uses outcomes as a tool for school principals for setting the direction, and leadership as a means for strategically managing human resources in order to meet policy requirements. Fourth, while one programme foregrounds educational theories, the other refers primarily to research on leadership in both private and public organisations. As such the knowledge base differs between the two. BI draws upon theories of knowledge management and change leadership based on empirical studies of corporations. It is a corporate way of thinking about learning management, and successful management in a market will implement decisions in a way that produces learning among staff as a foundation for being innovative (Tjeldvoll 2008). At the University

of Bergen they draw upon theories and empirical studies of children's learning and socialisation, curriculum studies, classroom studies, and the school as an organisation. Both programmes emphasise the need for critical reflection on national educational policy. However, the epistemological foundation for critique differs between the two.

Despite these differences, which are anchored in discrepant epistemological foundations, both programmes have been selected to implement a national policy for leadership education and training in Norway. In order to understand how this is possible, it is important to trace historical and cultural patterns of social development within the Norwegian context. As mentioned in the introduction, local municipalities and counties play a strong role in school governance, and it is their responsibility to provide in-service training for teachers and school leaders. The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, KS, has long argued against a mandatory leadership programme. According to this association, the school owner, that is, the municipalities, should be responsible for leadership development. Their argument is that in co-operation with their school leaders, they are better qualified to evaluate the needs and priorities for capacity building. Municipalities and counties do not wish intervention by the State in the form of mandatory requirements. Instead, they want to encourage the formation of a local network in which schools and school leaders are able to learn from one another. 'Best practice' is held as a basic principle, and it is the schools' or the schools owner's perspective, not a centrally developed model by experts and researchers which is preferred. Reflection on experiences or sharing of knowledge is their accepted mode of leadership development (cf. Møller and Schratz 2008). Nevertheless, KS has chosen to team up with the government in constructing the national programme and it has, as already mentioned, been made a requirement that higher education institutions are to establish partnerships or collaborate closely with local educational authorities in the design of the programmes.

On the one hand, this means that the municipalities have welcomed a national programme for leadership education and training funded by the State. On the other hand, they retain their right to choose among programmes offered by higher education institutions. As such there are tensions and contradictions in the way leadership preparation is conceptualised and in judgements on what would be the most promising leadership development.

In addition, it should be underlined that education policy documents in general more often than not will include both tensions and ambiguities. Voices of different stakeholders and political parties are included in order to negotiate and obtain broad consensus about national educational policy. It is probably the many small, local communities that give Norwegian society its distinctive character, and as part of the Norwegian legacy, educational policy documents have a long history of balancing national and municipal governing. As such, it is possible to understand why programmes anchored in discrepant epistemological foundations have been selected to implement a national policy for leadership education and training in Norway. An implication of possible different definitions and practices is that through funding diverse programmes the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training supports and provides the local municipalities with the responsibility and authority to make the choices, and so local democracy is retained.

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Chapter 36
Leadership for Learning – Learning for Leadership: The Impact of Professional Development

Stephan Gerhard Huber

Introduction

In view of the ever-increasing responsibilities of school leaders for ensuring and enhancing the quality of schools, school leadership has recently become one of the central concerns of educational policy makers. In many countries, the development of school leaders is high on the agenda. There seems to be broad international agreement about the need for school leaders to have the capacities required to improve in their schools the teaching of teachers for the learning of pupils.

Hence, school leaders need to have a profound knowledge of learning. They need this knowledge in order to take care of their own learning as professionals and of that of their staff and that of their pupils. In their leadership responsibility, they are in charge of providing learning opportunities and creating a supportive learning environment for all stakeholders. In this respect they are serving the core purpose of school and schooling and in the leadership of professionals, school leaders are "leaders for learning".

Regarding the school leaders' own learning and that of teachers, the learning needs and the abilities of adults have to be taken into account. Hence, it is important to consider basic andragogic principles (for a further account see, for example, Kidd 1975; Knowles 1980; Corrigan 1980; Blum and Butler 1989; Siebert 1996; Harteis et al. 2000; Gruber 2000; Mandl and Gerstenmaier 2000; and many others). In this respect, (continuous) professional development (PD), of a formal and an informal kind, plays an important part in the professionalisation of school leaders and teachers as professionals. Types of PD have to be found that support a successful transfer from theory into praxis, from knowing to acting, from PD activities to day-to-day practice (Whitehead 1929; Kolb 1984; Schön 1983, 1984).

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In this chapter, international trends and recommendations for PD will be presented, the use of multiple learning approaches and of different modes and types of learning in PD will be described, and a theoretical model for research and evaluation of PD will be suggested.

International Trends

In spite of differences in cultural and institutional traditions, a number of international patterns or tendencies in PD can be identified from a global perspective. These have been derived from results of an international comparative study of the PD landscape for educational leadership personnel in 15 countries (Huber 2004), as well as from expert meetings on international conferences covering leadership training and development. Extensive literature reviews confirm the development of PD over the last few decades. While some of the following trends may be viewed as differences in emphasis, others may be so significant as to represent paradigm shifts. The largest differences are evident in those countries with longer experience in PD for school leaders and PD research. Current trends and paradigm shifts include:

- Provider: centralised planning and decentralised implementation of programmes

  – Central quality assurance and decentralised provision
  – New forms of cooperation and partnership
  – Dovetailing theory and praxis

- Target groups: broader and expanded understanding of the leadership function: qualifying teams and developing the leadership capacity of schools
- Timing and pattern: extended education and multi-phase and modularised designs of programmes

  – Extensive and comprehensive programmes
  – Multi-phase designs and modularisation including preparatory qualification

- Aims: adjusting the programme to explicit aims and objectives
- Contents: holistic, reflective and communicative emphasis

  – Personal development instead of training for a role
  – The communicative and cooperative shift
  – From administration and maintenance to leadership, change and continuous improvement
  – New paradigms of leadership
  – Orientation towards the school's core purpose

- Methods: aligning methods to contents

  – From knowledge acquisition to creation and development of knowledge
  – Experience and application orientation
  – New ways of learning: workshops and the workplace

From Theory to Praxis, from Knowing to Doing

The central question of all PD is that of its impact. What leads to the experience of professional effectiveness, to professional competence, to gaining expertise by reflected experiences, and to professionalism? What makes one confident in working in a professional context, what increases job satisfaction, motivation and job performance (in terms of achievement of a professional)?

School leaders, as do adult learners in general, bring their personal and professional experiences, their knowledge and their own way of seeing themselves to bear on the learning process to a high degree. While among children's learning something new prevails, the learning biographies of adults have the effect that their own learning is above all follow-up learning (see Knowles 1980; Siebert 1996). Adult learners select what they learn, they filter information, consciously or subconsciously. Thereby, they proceed in a way that is much more problem-oriented than theme-centred and the effects of learning are more sustainable when there is the possibility to apply in practice what they have learned.

According to Gruber (2000), gaining experience for professional competences means learning in complex application-relevant and practice-relevant situations (see also Joyce and Showers 1980). New competences are mostly gained by practice followed by feedback and reflection. However, sufficient theoretical foundations should be imparted as well so that a reflection of practice beyond the well-worn subjective everyday life theories can take place. Adults expect that the knowledge and understanding gained is a tool that can be applied in specific and extremely complex work situations, with as little loss due to transfer as possible.

Their individual experiences always have a subliminal influence on the new information and at the same time are the foundations on which something new can be learned. Themes that cannot be linked to previously existing cognitive systems are very much up in the air, so to speak, and mostly are quickly forgotten (ibid.). Hence, it is preferable to refer the new information explicitly to the experiences and anchor them there. The reality and the experiences of the participants, their needs and problems, should be the starting point and the point of reference for the selection of content and of methods applied.

A lot of people complain that despite a high subjective satisfaction of participants about seminars and courses (process evaluation), the sustainability and transfer effect of what was learned to everyday practice are rather low (impact evaluation) (see also Wahl 2001).

Knowledge that cannot be made use of is called "inert knowledge" (Whitehead 1929; Renkl 1996). In order to prevent this from happening, there is no single top-priority strategy or method, but it is obvious that a big spectrum of different strategies and methods in PD is most successful. It is advisable to choose a variety of methods that help individual learners to accept new information, not only on the cognitive level, but to motivate them to call outdated patterns of thinking, patterns of interpretation, and mental maps into question, and maybe to give up well-worn patterns of behaviour (see Antal 1997a, b).

This interaction of theory and praxis, knowing and doing, is described in Fig. 36.1.

Fig. 36.1 From theory to
praxis, from knowing to
doing (see Huber 2009a, c)
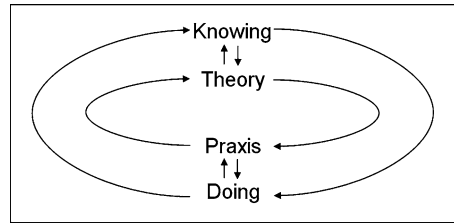
Multiple Approaches to Learning in (Continuous) Professional Development

Recently, in the professional development of school leaders "course formats" in PD are not any longer exclusively the focus of attention, but other formats and approaches have been developed. The use of multiple approaches can be observed. Among them are cognitive theoretical ways of learning (lectures and self-study), which primarily serve to impart information, as well as cooperative (e.g. group work) and communicative process-oriented procedures (e.g. project work) and reflexive methods (e.g. self-assessment and feedback as well as supervision).

The new forms and instruments of PD are distinguished in that they foster in a concrete and motivating way the subject-based analysis and reflection of one's individual professional practice, encourage the dialogue and the cooperation with colleagues, and contribute to the expansion of the profession-related action repertoire (see Reusser and Tremp 2008).

PD has changed over the last few years. Important aspects include: demand-, practice- and sustainability-orientation. Thereby, two requirements are important.

First, PD has to integrate diagnostic means as a starting point for training and development programmes (to develop differentiated approaches to the PD's aims and goals). In order to provide specialised programmes adjusted to the needs of individual persons, groups or particular schools, first the previous knowledge, subjective theories, attitudes, expectations, goals and motivation of the potential participants have to be determined. These provide the starting point for the planning of PD and the approaches to learning then have to be related to that.

Second, sustainability has to become a focus of attention. How is it possible to move from knowledge to action (see Huber 2001, 2008; Huber and Hader-Popp 2005; Wahl 2001), to carry out the transfer from theory to praxis, and to transfer what has been learned into one's teaching? To achieve that, practice-orientation plays an important part.

In the following sections, the learning opportunities as shown in Fig. 36.2 are briefly described.

Courses (external/inhouse): Course formats are part of the basic methods of PD. Used innovatively, they take into account that "learning" in terms of modifying one's patterns of behaviour and thinking is to be comprehended as inspiration and information, reflection and exchange, experiment and realization.
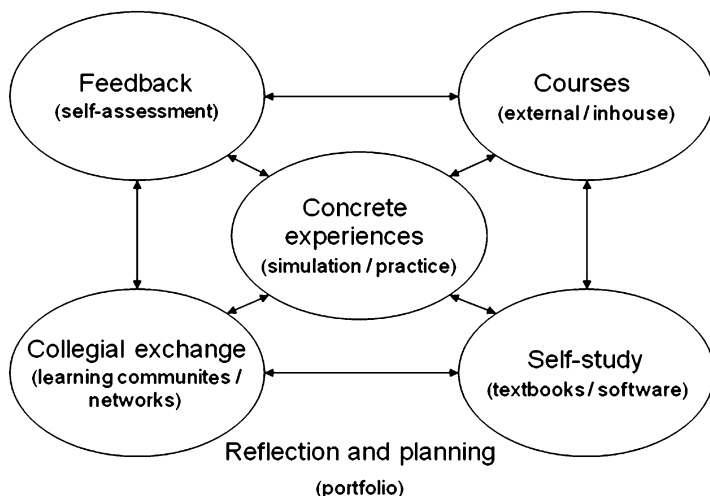
Fig. 36.2   Approaches to learning in PD (see Huber 2009a, c)

Self study (textbooks/software): Self study, too, is a format of PD that has been made use of for a long time. In self study methods, the respective topics of the seminars are prepared and explored. Printed study material should be up-to-date, mirror the state of the art of academic discourse and comprise authentic documents taken from practice, to provide the participants not only with basic and background knowledge but also with practical transfer support.

Concrete experiences (simulation/practice): Some PD programmes offer various opportunities for directly integrating practice. Of course, practice is always the starting point and goal of PD programmes, particularly when they are needs- and practice-oriented, but it is also a very interesting learning place in itself. The idea is that the real working context as clinical faculty alone comprises the appropriate complexity and authenticity necessary to lead to adequate learning processes. Working on individual projects, classroom observations, shadowing and, mentoring provide the opportunity to work on complex problems taken from the practice.

Collegial exchange (learning communities/networks): Professional learning communities and networks are central components in situated learning opportunities and provide chances for an intensive reflection on one's own action and behaviour patterns. By that, school leaders are likely to start from their individual cognitions and beliefs, which control their behaviour patterns, and from their subjective theories, and modify their ways of acting accordingly. Increasingly, professional learning communities and networks become a fixed part of PD programmes. If school leaders are integrated in learning communities and networks outside of their own schools, there is a higher possibility of widening their view and thus, change processes are supported (see Erickson et al. 2005; Little 2002 both quoted in Gräsel et al. 2006).

Reflection and planning (portfolio): To use all opportunities explicitly, to reflect upon them seems to be crucial. This can happen before to choose the right opportunities or to sharpen individual needs as well as after experiencing various opportunities to modify one's conceptualisations. At the beginning of a programme, participants often start a portfolio. The portfolio is suitable to combine teaching and learning with self-evaluation. It documents the development process and supports the individual's professional development planning.

In all these programmes – particularly if they are linked – emphasis is put on transfer, reflection and the exchange of what has been learned with one's colleagues. Application- and action-orientation are central in order to achieve the sustainability desired or required.

One aspect, however, is missing, which is the part of assessment-based feedback. This may not be underestimated as an important learning approach.

Feedback (self-assessment): It is highly recommended that participants go through a self-assessment for an individual potential analysis in order to receive feedback on relevant requirement areas and dimensions. Formatively used, it provides a needs-assessment and is a good start for planning PD. If done in the right way, it can have a very strong impact on motivation for learning, too, not only on the content.

However, the scope of even the best training is limited. As it is known from research on person-job-fit, training effects will be restricted if an individual's motives, values and interests do not correspond with the requirements of the position he or she is going to hold. So far, we have lacked opportunities for teachers and school leaders to find out whether they fit the personal demands of the modern school leadership role, which may answer the following question: Where do I have to place myself regarding the demands, compared to others?

Certain characteristics, abilities and attitudes towards leadership tasks become increasingly important when having to cope with school leadership, yet teachers do not receive feedback about their performance in these areas on a regular basis. A teacher has a fairly good idea about how much time he or she has to invest for lesson preparation. Nevertheless, a teacher has little idea about (for example) his or her readiness for criticism compared to that of colleagues. We lack standardized and scientific tools which serve as an orientation for teachers interested in school leadership or for reflecting on personal strengths and weaknesses for experienced members of school leadership teams.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been derived from the results of various evaluations and, for instance, an international comparative study of the PD landscape for educational leadership personnel in 15 countries (Huber 2004), as well as from the conception and academic consultancy and evaluation of PD for school leadership (Huber, internal reports). The key features in the following list are associated with programmes that have a positive impact. In recent programme evaluations one

can find increasingly more of these constructs describing the conceptual premises or goals of the programmes. PD should be:

- As to the provider

  – Trainer-oriented, i.e. the trainers of PD are chosen carefully, because as the responsible people for the teaching and learning arrangement they are of a central importance for its quality.
  – Evaluation-oriented, i.e. the concept of PD plans for the implementation a (continuous) academic process evaluation that evaluates the individual modules related to their quality and identifies possibilities of development and improvement, on the basis of the evaluation results; moreover, it includes the evaluation of the impact regarding its sustainability.

- As to target groups

  – Participant-oriented, i.e. individual learning needs, such as learning time and learning speed, are taken into account by providing various options to choose from,
  – Participation-oriented, i.e. aiming at participants' taking part in decision-making,
  – Demand-oriented, this means it focuses on the present and future range of demands of the participants,

- As to timing and pattern

  – Process-oriented respectively multiphase, i.e. it provides systematic, long-term support,
  – Modularised, in order to grant flexibility and participant-orientation yet still ensure commitment and quality,

- As to the aims

  – Goal-oriented, i.e. it starts from explicit goals,
  – Theory-oriented, i.e. suitable theories are taken up and used
  – Practice-oriented, i.e. it focuses on school practice and school reality
  – Research-oriented: i.e. it is based upon recent national and international findings,
  – Competence-oriented, i.e. knowledge, abilities and skills, as well as aspects of the individual motivation of the participants are taken into account,
  – Effectiveness and sustainability-oriented, i.e. it is about different aspects of impact on the participants as well as about a bridge between theory and praxis and between knowledge and action,
  – Relevance-oriented, i.e. the acceptance and importance of the offer of PD is increased by means of the participants' certification,
  – Quality-oriented as to didactics, i.e. the PD is arranged in an optimal didactic way using various learning approaches and a consistent approach to aims, contents, methods, media and other macro-didactical aspects such as sequential learning, etc.

- As to the content

  - Value-oriented: i.e. it puts emphasis on values and pedagogical premises,
  - School system-oriented, i.e. focuses on recent developments in the school system (e.g. new projects and policies),
  - School context-oriented: i.e. it starts off with the particular situation of the school (contextual-external: environment of the school, contextual-internal: specific features of the organisation and educational field of action,
  - School development-oriented, i.e. it not only qualifies the participants but also aims at systematic school development in the participants' schools,
  - Cooperation and communication-oriented, i.e. it focuses on learning from and with colleagues through intensive cooperation
  - Method and content-oriented, i.e. efforts are made to create varied and accordingly challenging teaching and learning arrangements in order to live up to the different learning requirements and learning habits, as well as learning biographies of the participants and their partly heterogeneous needs and at the same time prevent the monotony and fatigue which result in boredom.

- As to the methods

  - Reflection-oriented, i.e. participants get various opportunities to reflect on their own particular competences and interests and to set up corresponding personal goals for learning and acting,
  - Activity-oriented, i.e. aiming at an active involvement of participants,
  - Self-organisation respectively action-oriented, i.e. participants are responsible for their own learning and create particular phases of PD themselves,
  - Performance and feedback-oriented, by providing the participants with confidential feedback on their performance,
  - Transfer-oriented, i.e. the implementation competence of the participants is fostered by constant support and therefore the sustainability of PD is secured.

A Theoretical Framework for Theory-Based Empirical Research and Evaluation

Previous research describes different levels for the evaluation of PD. Kirkpatrick (1994), for instance, describes four levels of evaluation:

- Level 1: Reaction (satisfaction of the participants based on the setting of training, the contents and the methods, etc.),
- Level 2: Learning (cognitive learning success and increase of knowledge),
- Level 3: Behaviour (transfer success in terms of action resulting from the content of training),
- Level 4: Results (organisational success in terms of the transfer of the content of training to organisational practice, resulting in positive organisational changes)

Guskey (2000, 2002), Muijs and Lindsay (2007) and Muijs et al. (2004) describe a model of evaluation comprising five levels:

- Level 1: Participants' reactions,
- Level 2: Participants' learning,
- Level 3: Organisational support and change,
- Level 4: Participants' use of new knowledge and skills,
- Level 5: Student learning outcomes.

For the elaboration of a theoretical model for theory-based empirical research and evaluation, the studies and models already presented help to formulate a theoretical framework.

It is suggested (e.g. Fend 1987, 1998; Helmke 2003) that the learning environment in different contexts and their nested multilevel structure (individual – learning environment/programmes – supplier – social/professional/regional context) should be taken into consideration. Furthermore, it should be considered that the impact on learning environments does not imply linear and monocausal direct conclusions from the quality of a programme to its impact on the participants. Moreover, the effectiveness depends on various processes on the participants' side.

The impact of the programme first of all concerns participation in the programme, perception of the programme, as well as judgement of the programme. Further, individual and professional context of the participants, the performance related context, as well as social conditions, have to be taken into account.

When it comes to the characteristics of the quality of concrete programmes of PD for teachers and school leaders, it is necessary for the model to include both the conception of the programme and its implementation. The model should ensure that both levels (conception and implementation) can be presented with the same features in order to judge similarities and discrepancies as well as consequences. As the perception and judgement processes are mediating processes, it has to be considered that programmes are not only judged by the participants themselves but also by colleagues.

The way the development programme is judged by participants, by their colleagues and school leadership, is an important factor in the participants' readiness to "make use of the programme" in terms of taking part, and therefore for the success of the programme. This becomes obvious if the attitude of the staff at the school of the participants towards the programme is rather sceptical and dismissive. The readiness to participate and the learning motivation of the participants as well as the individual judgement of the programme may be strongly influenced by this. Applying new knowledge and consequently modifying one's patterns of action can also be either favoured or completely prohibited depending on the atmosphere among staff (see Brouwer and Ten Brinke 1995a, b).

Focusing on the impact of the programme, the model has to consider that the intended impact (on teaching) usually does not happen immediately, but with a delay (see Staudt and Kriegesmann 1999). The model also must consider that various levels of impact exist (see models above; and Hallinger 2009, 1998, describes indirect models).

When considering the different levels of impact, it has to be assumed that the perception of the programme [in terms of its (expected) relevance for the practice, its (expected) usefulness, the participants' (expected) satisfaction with the programme] has to be looked at as a mediating process in the participants themselves, and does not represent a level of impact. Thereby the term impact – in contrast to its commonly understood meaning – is sharpened and aims at external views with measurable indicators and not solely at the subjective views of the participants.

Three levels of impact are differentiated by the model: changes of the characteristics of participants, changes of the performance of participants, and changes in the areas of application. The first level – changes of the characteristics of participants – concerns the learning of participants and touches on aspects such as competences, attitudes, job satisfaction, etc. These characteristics must be clearly distinguished from the behaviour in the area of application – the modified performance of the participant. Changes in the areas of application may be described at the third level.

Modified behaviour means that the classroom teaching of participants changes (this leads to a change in learning behaviour and eventually to a change in the learning of students), however, there is also a change in communication and the cooperative behaviour of colleagues. Participants may also influence the school development process of their school by their modified competences, attitudes, etc. as well as their improved performance.

The model provides not only a framework for structure and analysis of particular research studies but also a framework for evaluation and needs assessment of PD, by taking into account the plurality and the resulting choice of factors that have to be considered (see pre-studies by Huber et al. 2008; Huber and Radisch 2008; Huber 2009a, c).

What Ditton (2000a, b) demonstrates for the realm of the school about the functioning of such a model, may be extended to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes of PD for teachers and school leaders. Even if the elaboration of the model does not meet the requirements of academic theories, it is an important preparatory work and functions as a well-based guideline for further research in that it demonstrates the necessary designs of studies and the relevant research questions (see p. 76). It is an attempt to adequately demonstrate the complexity of the matter and to include existing research strings and results.

Taking into consideration the insights of research on classroom teaching, that the classroom level and concrete teaching content is crucial, the model of effectiveness instead focuses on the programme level as the important level of analysis. The model differentiates between the features of the programme, the perception of the programme, the judgement of the programme, the participation in the programme, the impact of the programme as well as the background conditions.

When talking about PD, the question about the definition of effectiveness is inevitable. What influences effectiveness? How can effectiveness be provided and made visible? The framework (Fig. 36.3) can be used for conducting research, for evaluation, for practice and for use at the school level (in particular for school
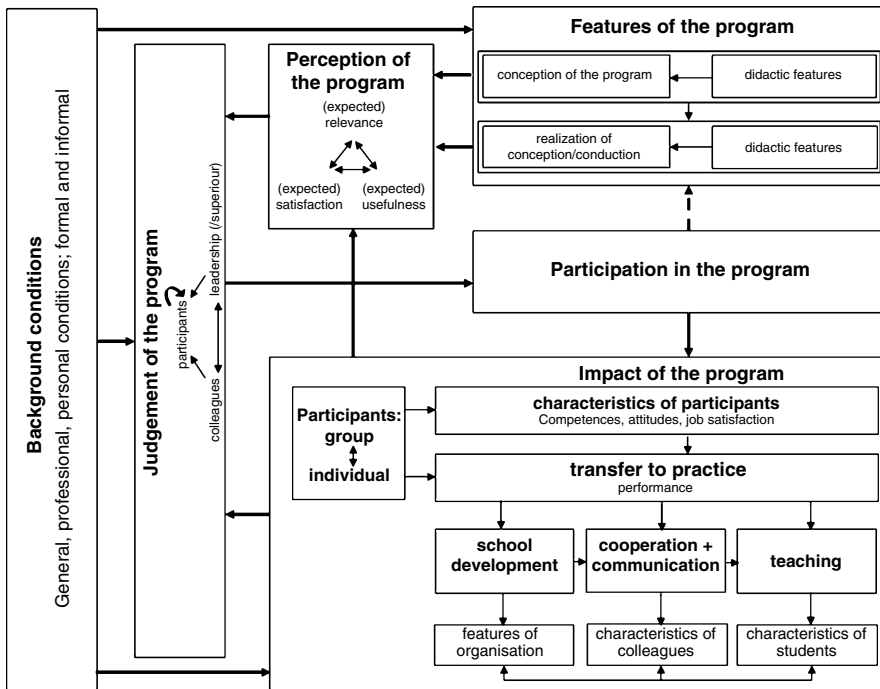
Fig. 36.3 Theoretical framework for theory-based empirical research and evaluation

leadership), in order to provide an overview of various important aspects (see Huber et al. 2008; Huber and Radisch 2008).

Features of the Programme

Features of the programme do not only consider the conception of the programme (set) but also its realization/implementation with respect to conduct (actual). They are determined especially by the background conditions as well as findings from surveys of needs and demands. The didactic features may be divided into macro-didactic and micro-didactic features. The macro-didactic features are for example, the provider (i.e. central or decentral, state-run teacher training institute, or a free provider), the purpose of PD with respect to its main goals, the speaker/trainer-concept (the professional background of speaker/trainer), considerations of the formation of the teams (i.e. mixed background or focus on one expert group), the status of PD (mandatory vs optional), the duration, the timing and the time structure (i.e. multi phases, modularisation, sequencing). Micro-didactic features are for example the concrete aims of teaching-learning situations, the formats, the contents, the methods and the media used, as well as the speakers or trainers who conduct and implement the programme.

Background Conditions

The features of the programme are influenced by the general, professional and personal formal and informal background conditions that include aspects of the job profile, educational aims, measures of the school board, characteristics of the education system, legal requirements, resources (financial, temporal and special), as well as general requirements concerning PD and the interest in PD. The personal background conditions are, for instance, individual learning and professional biography, moral values or family and health aspects. These background conditions have an obvious impact on the design (the conception and realisation) of the programme, on the judgement of the programme by the participants, as well as on its impact.

Perception of the Programme

The perception of the programme is also influenced by the way it is promoted regarding its didactic features. As well, it is influenced by the actual delivery of the programme (judgement, secondary experience) when it is personally experienced through direct participation or heard about from other participants. Important factors, too, are the congruency between the conception and implementation, as well as the (expected) relevance, the (expected) usefulness and the (expected) satisfaction.

Judgement of the Programme

Initially, participants themselves judge the programme they partake in. However, colleagues (in their own school or in schools of other participants) and superiors judge the programme as well, which then may influence the participant's own judgement. The judgement of the programme influences actual participation in the programme, of course. If the judgement by the triad of participants, colleagues and superiors is positive, the programme appears to be useful and participation is likely.

Participation in the Programme

Besides participation in terms of attendance, further features may be formulated to evaluate participation in the programme, for example intensity (actual learning time) and active (visible) participation in programmes (activity level of participants).

Impact of the Programme

The impact of the programme may first of all be observed at two levels: the level of the entire group of participants (collective impact) and the level of the individual participant (individual impact). Two further kinds of impact may also be observed: one concerns the change of characteristics of participants (i.e. competences, attitudes, job satisfaction). The second concerns the transfer to practice, the application of what has been learned in the PD (modifications in the performance of the participants). Here, three different kinds of impact on professional action may be observed: (1) direct or indirect impact on the organisational features of a school via processes of school development; (2) impact on formal and informal content and processes of communication and cooperation among staff; (3) impact on the educational core purpose, teaching, which is the ultimate aim, resulting in an impact on the characteristics of pupils. The experience of impact then has an influence on participation in the programme via the judgement of the programme.

The model does not imply that every single PD programme should have an impact at all three levels.

Conclusions and Looking Ahead

Existing knowledge is rather scarce and selective regarding the impact of PD programmes and their importance for the professionalisation and professionalism of education professionals. It is based on rather simply structured evaluations. More challenging designs for theory-based empirical research are needed in order to meet the complexity mentioned above.

The theoretical framework for empirical research and evaluation presented here is deliberately formulated as an "open" model, in order to enable an interdisciplinary approach; it may be used for formulating further theory, for research, for evaluation and practice.

In school practice, it may be used as a reflection tool for potential participants, for supervisors, for presenters or trainers as well as for people responsible for programmes of PD.

Therefore, it may be used to position the planned or conducted programmes and the aims of these programmes, and to concretise the complex interdependency and make them obvious. Therefore, it might contribute not only to planning and fine-tuning of conceptions but also to an implementation of programmes, and add to a better understanding of the complex impact of PD.

It offers a framework for evaluation, which helps to position evaluation and to sharpen the design. It offers the possibility of narrowing or widening the focus, depending on the aim and orientation of the evaluation and to put different areas in the central perspective, to include them more or less precisely and to take out less important areas, without losing sight of the overall connection of different aspects and levels of evaluation.

For the area of research and theory formation, the theoretical framework contributes to the handling of complexity as well as the systemising of assumptions of impact. Particular assumptions of impact are presented and put in a larger context. In conclusion, we should emphasise that the framework does not imply that all the programmes of PD are aimed at all the levels of impact; different programmes evoke different kinds of impact. Therefore, the choice of criteria of impact in research and evaluation studies is important.

The issue of the impact of school leadership development programmes is closely connected to that of school leadership effectiveness in general. Huber and Muijs (2010) provide a literature review of studies and meta-studies of school leader effectiveness and state that, in general, results support the belief that principals exercise a measurable though indirect impact on school effectiveness and student achievement. The question which should be asked is no longer whether or not principals do make a difference but, more particularly, which means they apply and through which paths they achieve such impact.

Huber and Muijs (2010) would expect effective leadership to be a factor that helps create the conditions under which teachers can be optimally effective, which in turn would result in higher levels of pupil performance. Context is an important factor here, however, in that the influence of leadership at the school level is clearly stronger where school autonomy is greater.

There is some evidence that transformational and distributed leadership in particular can contribute to organisational effectiveness. That the research base is not as strong as one might expect reflects not just a dearth of research compared to prescription, but also deficiencies in research methods. There is a strong overreliance on self-report in leadership studies, where the most common form of research design is either a survey or interviews, usually of a limited number of school leaders. Studies are almost always post-hoc, trying to work backwards with a retrospective view on the research object. This practice is clearly limited. Both survey and interview-based methodologies, while highly useful, have, when used as the sole means of data collection, some severe limitations. Post-hoc interviews are heavily prone to attributional bias (the tendency to attribute to ourselves positive outcomes, while negative outcomes are externally attributed, Weiner 1980), as well as to self-presentation bias and interviewer expectancy effects (the tendency to give those answers we feel the interviewer wants to hear). Where leaders have received leadership development, there is an increasing tendency to hear the theories learned on leadership programmes repeated in interview situations. Survey questionnaires are likewise limited, especially where they are cross-sectional, as only correlational data can be collected. The issues of expectancy effects and bias exist here as well, as does attributional bias. In one survey study, for example, respondents tended to describe themselves as transformational leaders, while their line managers were described as using transactional leadership styles (Muijs et al. 2006).

These limitations mean it is often hard to make strong statements either about impact, or about processes. The quantitative methodologies used need more often to be longitudinal, and to make more use of quasi-experimental designs, and even of field trials of new leadership methods.

Moreover, there is the need to gather data not only from school leaders but also from teachers and others (to add views from an external perception to self-reports from a self-perception). Additionally, observations, although cost-intensive and not easy to implement as they most often intervene with the day-to-day practice which should be observed might help to move to multiperspectivity and triangulation.

Qualitative approaches likewise need to be more multi-perspective and longitudinal. They need to employ methods and instruments that allow more in-depth interrogation of processes such as ethnographic studies and genuine long-term case studies as well as the methods currently used.

Obviously, feasibility is also restricting research (of us and of our colleagues) and therefore the research designs should have appropriate funding to provide better conditions for feasibility. Therefore funding for research is an important aspect, too. There is a need to have large enough research grants, which allow cooperative research arrangements to develop more sophisticated multi-perspective and longitudinal designs.

Interestingly, even though some discussion has started about combining quantitative and qualitative methods, integrating them in a mixed-methods research design, with differences in approach (explanative or exploratory mixed-method), few studies in leadership research (but also in educational research in general) are trying to integrate these demands and ideas into their research designs. It is also interesting to see how alternative data gathering methods might illuminate the complexity of organisation or leadership context, as e.g. Huber (2008; 2009b) uses Social Network Analysis and Life Curve Analysis, and asks the participants for pictures and metaphors. Besides data gathering methods, there is also a need of more refined methods of data analysis such as multi-level, growth models, structure equation modelling, which are about to become popular.

More original research in the field needs to be undertaken, in particular outside of North America, as the overreliance on findings from studies conducted in the United States needs to be alleviated. Leadership, like other factors in education, is contextual (i.e. structurally and culturally specific), and it is therefore not valid to expect findings to apply unproblematically across countries and even continents. There are obvious contextual differences in terms of leadership relating to the extent of autonomy school leaders have within the system, their appointment and selection criteria, while less immediately obvious cultural differences make it even less likely that one could simply import findings from one context to the other without at least some adaptation. This means that the tendency to move straight to prescription becomes potentially even more harmful where the research base is from an entirely different (cultural) context, where school leadership will operate under different circumstances and conditions.

Therefore, while leadership research has made important contributions to the field of education, which have had practical benefits, if we are genuinely to move both research and practice on, we need to do more rigorous quantitative and qualitative research, aimed at measuring impact and exploring processes, taking into account the complexity of schools as organisations, and refraining from an overly prescriptive approach that, on the basis of very limited research, posits absolute

truths about good practice. If we continue the practice of coming up with a never-ending stream of poorly researched ideas, sooner or later research in this field is likely to lose credibility in the eyes of both practitioners and researchers, losing the possible benefits of genuinely improving what remains one of the key factors in educational effectiveness.

Last but not least we need to create better "fits" of theories, empirical research and experienced practice. Hence, as well as all the methodological and methodical questions and desired modified research practice, there is also a need to refine theoretical models and theories (whether with a very focused or with a broader approach). Empirical research should lead to further developed theories and theoretical assumptions should guide our empirical work (if working in a deductive methodological approach).

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Chapter 37
The Development of Leadership Capability in a Self-Managing Schools System: The New Zealand Experience and Challenges

Cathy Wylie

Introduction

The recent OECD project and report *Improving School Leadership* (Pont et al. 2008) put school leadership on the international radar for policy makers seeking levers to improve education. This report recommends more school autonomy, with support, and it notes that greater accountability is school autonomy's companion. The New Zealand experience may be particularly instructive for other educational systems attracted by school autonomy, since New Zealand schools operate individually, without being nested in districts or local authorities. As in New Zealand, systems that emphasise school autonomy will probably face increased tensions at school level in balancing leading for learning with the administrative aspects of school leadership, as school leaders take responsibility for budgets, employment, and property. It is only recently that New Zealand policy around leadership has focused more on increasing school capability to lead learning. Other school systems taking the school autonomy route will also need to wrestle with how to find productive balances and relationships between school autonomy, support, and accountability so that real progress might be made in relation to enriching learning opportunities and outcomes relevant to the current century rather than the past (Gilbert 2005). Before that, they will also need to think through assumptions about the nature of these three key elements, as suggested in Elmore's cautionary analysis in the same OECD study (Elmore 2008). He points to the shortcomings of the usual forms of accountability in providing a reliable mechanism for improvement of leadership for learning.

This chapter is, however, not simply a cautionary tale, but a tale about how educational policy can be based on research, and can gather momentum through processes that bring together policy makers, practitioners and researchers, around a common purpose of improving learning through attending to school leadership practices.

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The chapter starts by outlining the context of self-managing schools in New Zealand and the issues relating to autonomy and accountability which led to the new policy focus on leadership for learning. The chapter looks at these issues first at the school level, and then at the system level. Next, it outlines the way the new policy framework was developed, and its current use in relation to school leadership development. It concludes with an analysis of the likely further use of the framework, and some possible tensions ahead. These tensions arise because this recent policy framework gathers momentum in a new policy environment whose greater emphasis on formal school accountability and its measurement contrasts with the framework's emphasis on capability development through changing everyday school practice. The new policy environment is likely to invite a return to defensiveness and caution on the part of individual school leaders.

School Autonomy and Accountabilities

New Zealand schools have a rare autonomy amongst the OECD countries, an autonomy that makes them somewhat like charter schools in the USA that are not part of a larger non-profit or for-profit organisation. Since 1989, when school self-management began, they have not belonged to any school district or local authority. Thus principal appointments are made by the individual school's board of trustees, elected by the school's parents and largely composed of parents, with a staff representative and, in secondary schools, a teacher representative. In guidelines given to boards (and these are guidelines, not instructions), the principal has often been referred to as a CEO so as to distinguish the governance function of the board from school management.

Boards are legally responsible for ensuring that their schools operate within a framework of government regulations. These regulations include a national curriculum also, recently revised with much sector input. The NZ Curriculum (Ministry of Education 2007) provides a framework for the development of school-based curriculum, and is not highly specified. The regulations place emphasis, national secondary qualifications, and from 2010, national standards for literacy and mathematics at primary school. There are National Administration Guidelines, which include requirements for schools to have a strategic plan with annual plans and targets related to them. Schools create their own plans and targets within these parameters. Until 2012, when schools will be required to report student achievement in relation to the new national standards for literacy and numeracy for years 1–8, there are no mandated or uniform performance indicators as there are in other educational systems, whether using assessment data or surveys of parent or students.

Schools were first required to provide reports on their performance that included goals and targets, and analysis of variance of performance in relation to the targets for the year, in 2003. The core value placed on school autonomy led to initial suspicion of this new requirement, but it also led to the lack of central prescription. Officials also saw that the new requirement for annual reports against targets gave an opportunity to

foster school planning, evaluative and ongoing self-improvement capability, using analysis of achievement and student engagement patterns. It has taken some time – longer than it could have if the planning process was more integrated with account-ability mechanisms of a formative kind – but this annual planning process has taken root as one of the important processes of school development. National survey data in 2009 and 2010 showed that, principals were almost unanimous in agreeing that they would use something like the current school planning and reporting cycle even if they were not required to do so.

School Autonomy and Performance Management

Each individual school board is also responsible for carrying out an annual review of the principal's performance, which should include goals related to the school's annual plan, and identify ongoing development needs. Boards have available to them guid-ance on processes, and a set of standards. There was much initial disquiet among the teaching profession and some academics about the mandated introduction of both teacher and principal appraisal and then professional standards in the late 1990s (Fitzgerald et al. 2003). Part of this suspicion arose from anything that was mandated in a self-managing schools context: a suspicion that something coming from govern-ment would necessarily increase bureaucracy, at the expense of professionalism and its exercise. Some principals feared that the mandated annual appraisal process mixed two contrary aims: evaluation of the previous year's performance with identifying professional development needs, which would need to be done in a context of trust so that the identification was honest (Cardno 1999). Some of this apprehension was related to the use of appraisal results for pay decisions. The final version of the policy was watered down to a set of satisfactory teacher standards that teachers must meet to move to the next step on the national pay scale. The awarding of bonuses to prin-cipals, linked to individual employment contracts, was short-lived. In the event, the way the mandatory requirements played out differed among schools; as did their perceived usefulness. But there are currently no major concerns about the mandated nature of performance review being expressed by principals and teachers.

This may be because, unlike Australia (see Thomas and Watson 2011), perfor-mance standards currently form a minor part of the policy settings for New Zealand school leadership. They have recently been reframed in terms of four of the areas of practice of the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* framework, and they are more consistent with the general policy direction and emphases. But they do not exist as a scale which could be used to make comparative judgements of principal quality or performance, and they are not tightly linked to performance pay. It is interesting to compare the two neighbouring countries in terms of their emphases. The New Zealand approach is currently still based on capability improvement through adult learning, and the use of processes and tools that spur self-evaluation and ongoing data-using inquiry cycles, rather than relying on formal accountabilities and mea-surements, including the ultimate 'shame and blame' to spur school leaders on.

One would like to think that the New Zealand approach shows that policy has been carefully formed with heed to the existing evidence around the impact of different accountability approaches (e.g. House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee 2010; Lee 2008, 2010; Sunderman (2008); Tymms and Merrell 2010; Wyse et al. 2010). I suspect that the autonomy of the country's schools has also tempered periodic interest in performance management as a mechanism to improve educational quality and student outcomes. It is difficult to get a consistent approach across all the country's 2,400 school boards. Much is expected of them (Ministry of Education 2010). In 2009, national survey data showed that two-thirds of secondary trustees thought that the overall responsibility of their role was too much. Boards often do not keep up with Ministry of Education guidelines (Chapman 2008), and recently a quarter of principals said they had to take responsibility for ensuring their annual performance review occurred (Anderson 2009). External advisors are used for many principal performance reviews. A recent Audit Office report criticised the Ministry of Education's support for boards (Office of the Auditor General 2008); but to provide the ongoing development for boards and new trustees that would be needed for all boards to fully perform their role would cost much more than the current funding for board support.

The Role of School Reviews

A separate government department, the Education Review Office (ERO), is responsible for providing each school with a regular review of its overall performance. These reviews are available on-line, with a summary for parents and the local community. They are narrative reviews, focused on changing government and school priorities, based on ERO reviewers' visits to schools, reading of school documentation, including school self-reviews, interviews, and parent surveys. These reviews do not result in a formal classification of the school, for example, as 'outstanding' or 'poor', let alone 'failing'. Schools have either been within the 'normal' cycle (once every 3 years), or receiving 'supplementary' reviews more frequently, until they have addressed the concerns of the ERO review team. Around 16% of schools would fall into this latter category in any 1 year. Most return quite quickly to the 'normal' cycle. However, 18% of schools have had two or more supplementary reviews, and 4% have had four or more. Schools serving low income communities and those with very small rolls are over-represented among these struggling schools.

In 2010, some added categorisation of schools began, still in terms of the length of the review cycle rather than rankings of schools (although already some schools that have met the criteria for the longest review cycle are using that in their school publicity). The criteria for the new 4–5 year review cycle apply when:

• Schools are high performing, and have been for some time, and where there is
• Stable governance and management,
• Clear understanding and use of self-review in decision-making,

- Use of student achievement information in strategic and annual plans and in improving teaching and learning,
- Evidence of student progress and improved achievement over time, and
- A clear focus on ongoing improvement (Stoop 2009).

There is no doubt that schools place weight on the results of their ERO review, and that it is important to them to remain in the 3-year cycle – and now, many will be seeking to attain the 4–5 year cycle – to maintain their public reputation, and to retain their sense of autonomy. Schools do use the results to inform their planning – but they were less likely to use the ERO Chain of Quality model which until this year underpinned the reviews. ERO has made its processes more systematic, and has developed a stronger set of evaluation indicators for both its own and school use, encouraging ongoing self-review. But there is still some wariness about the ERO process, and the varying quality of reviewers. National survey data in 2009 and 2010 show that most principals think formative accountability through regular discussions with creditable peer/s based on the school's own strategic plan would be more useful to their school than the periodic ERO review process.

Disconnects in the System

What the New Zealand system currently does not provide is any systematic linkage of school planning, performance management, and school review, contributing to lost opportunities for school development, and inefficient use of what is likely to become a static or reducing amount of public money for education (Wylie 2009).

For example, boards are legally responsible for the performance of schools. The annual school report belongs to the board. School annual reports go to the regional office of the Ministry of Education, but they have not been systematically used for formative discussions about school issues, since the Ministry of Education has not had a clear role in its work with schools. Most secondary principals believed in 2009 that no-one beyond their school took much notice of their annual school report – yet over half would like some professional discussion with the Ministry of Education to inform their school planning work related to student achievement (Wylie in press).

Nor have school annual reports been used systematically to identify schools at risk (Office of the Auditor General 2008). The Ministry of Education was established as part of the same reforms in 1989 that handed responsibility to the new boards of trustees at each school, as a policy ministry. Its regional offices largely focused on property until a decade ago. Gradually the Ministry of Education has taken on more system leadership responsibilities as it became clear that schools could not generate the supports – and challenges – they needed on their own, acting individually. Much of this central leadership role has centred around professional development programmes that focus on changing school practices and roles, particularly in numeracy and literacy; and school improvement clusters of schools (Wylie in press).

Since 2001, the Ministry of Education has also been able to step in with 'statutory intervention' where serious risks to school quality or sustainability are identified through analysis of adverse indicators, including Education Review Office school reviews, or when school boards seek help – which accounts for around half the interventions. Around 3–4% of schools receive such intervention each year. Intervention is customised to the school, usually through contracted support that is part-funded by the school. Most of this intervention is concluded within a year or two.

Costs and Possibilities of School Autonomy

New Zealand's country report to the OECD project *Improving School Leadership* attributed both the strengths and weaknesses in the country's policy settings for school leadership, to the overall policy setting of school self-management (Ministry of Education 2007). For example, the school self-management overall policy setting gave principals real decision-making power in relation to the management of their school – but it also gave them multiple accountabilities, with a significant increase in workload and administration tasks, including working with their school board. New Zealand principals spent more of their time on administration, and less on supervising and evaluating teachers than their counterparts in most other countries taking part in the 2006 TIMSS studies (Robinson et al. 2009, p. 63). Principals could shape their own leadership development and the development of their staff around the particular context of their school, but development of leadership for learning was voluntary.

> …the mechanisms to ensure consistency and equity across schools are weaker [than autonomy and flexibility], which creates challenges to improving the leadership of school leaders who are in need of development. If school leaders themselves, or their employing board of trustees, do not recognise the need for leaders to undertake development, the system has no strong levers to require it of them (Ministry of Education 2007, p. 72).

This statement captures a prime tension in the New Zealand policy approach to leadership and school development. On the one hand, it has not been prescriptive, or assumed that 'one size fits all'. Inherent in the emphasis on the individual school as the basic building block in the system is the assumption that school contexts and communities differ, and that these differences are important in decisions about school organisation and school priorities. For example, there was a realisation at the end of the first decade of school self-management that government would have to take a more strategic role towards school leadership supply and development. Because of the attention given to differences in school contexts, the new development programmes that came from this realisation always had at least some focus on participant priorities and projects or problems in their own school setting. Principals have also been encouraged to think of their ongoing development as leaders in both personal and school contextual terms.

On the other hand, participation in development programmes is voluntary (including the national programme for first-time principals), and the support that schools receive to help them in their ongoing development, is also largely self-generated.

The NZ country report to the OECD *Improving School Leadership* project noted that because individual school boards employed principals, there were little national data available on the size of the pool available, or its quality. There was some evidence that many first-time principals, especially at the primary level, stepped into this complex role without substantial school management or leadership experience. There were reports of relatively high stress levels among principals, even though levels of enjoyment of the job were also high.

The country report for New Zealand did not question what had been achieved through two decades of educational policy centred on school self-management. Analysis for the School Leadership and Student Outcomes Best Evidence Synthesis indicated that national performance levels had shown little change for most of the past two decades (Robinson et al. 2009). The low educational outcomes for the indigenous Māori population that had been a key fuel for the original school self-management reforms did not start to improve until recently. The main impetus for this improvement was the introduction of the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA), a new standards-based rather than norm-based set of secondary school qualifications. Māori secondary qualification rates are now rising steadily. For example, there has been an increase in the proportion of Māori school leavers with a level 2 NCEA qualification, which gives a pretty solid basis for tertiary study and employment opportunities, from 29% in 2003 to 53% in 2009.

A collection of articles in 2009 that looked back on the New Zealand reforms showed agreement on the systemic costs of too much school autonomy (Langley 2009). Interestingly, the authors included a previous Minister for Education, and the previous Secretary for Education, who had started to move education policy from the late 1990s towards a focus on improving capability and lifting expectations.

These systemic costs included:

- System fragmentation,
- Too much local variation in capability and quality of education,
- Lack of policy co-ordination,
- An emphasis on competition between schools at the cost of co-operation,
- Fewer community partnerships than envisaged, and
- A focus on administration and management at the cost of a focus on learning.

But school autonomy is now well embedded in the New Zealand system. As a consequence, the current key policy questions are around support and accountability, and the role that capability building will play in educational improvement. In the next section, as I outline the development of the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* policy document and the way the findings from the School Leadership and Student Outcomes Best Evidence Synthesis have been used, I will return to these policy questions.

Current Leadership Development and Its Engine

The expectation that leadership for learning should underpin the New Zealand principal's role, including their management responsibilities, is very clearly signalled in current policy. *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* (Ministry of Education 2009) is the most significant policy document on school leadership to emerge in the two decades of the country's experience of school self-management. For the first time, there is a description of effective school leadership which is both convincing and challenging for New Zealand principals, and which also provides a consistent framework for government funding for leadership development.

Kiwi Leadership for Principals is the fruit of a project that had its origins when sector groups came together with Ministry of Education officials and researchers to discuss the framing of the Ministry of Education initiated best evidence synthesis of the research on educational leadership and student outcomes (Robinson et al. 2009). Partly because school self-management gave New Zealand principals great autonomy without much support and without much experience of working constructively with the government education agencies, there was some initial suspicion that this best evidence synthesis would lead to prescription based on overseas research undertaken in different educational and social contexts, places in which principals did not have management responsibilities as well as responsibility for leading learning. This project, running alongside the best evidence synthesis, provided new opportunities for sector leaders, including teacher unions, principal groups, the national organisation for school boards, researchers and government officials to discuss the nature of leadership in New Zealand schools and its issues alongside the emerging findings of the best evidence synthesis, and then for local principal groups to discuss and further contribute to the emerging framework. By the end of the process, this framework had good levels of commitment and ownership. The best evidence synthesis, which provides a robust framework for the development of school leadership for learning at both practice and policy levels, had gained New Zealand examples, including Māori-medium schools where leadership has community dimensions over and above educational leadership, and strong endorsements from sector organisations and professional development providers.

School leaders feel that their importance has been validated. Both the best evidence synthesis and *Kiwi Leadership for Principals*, which draws substantially on it, affirm that school leadership *does* matter for student outcomes. Both do this in ways that make the descriptions of *how* to lead, so that educational leadership has positive impact on student outcomes, of real interest to principals, rather than arousing their defensiveness. School leadership focuses on school practices and processes rather than the heroic individual.

Both the policy document and the best evidence synthesis recognise the complexity and size of the school leadership role in New Zealand, and the consequent challenges that arise for focusing on pedagogical leadership.

The model at the heart of the *Kiwi Leadership* policy document emphasises improvement in student outcomes, with an emphasis on Māori and Pasifika

students, through leader and teacher capability development, support and challenge, and it positions schools as organisations that do not stand still. The model is summarised as:

Educational Leadership is at the centre of the model. Educational leaders lead learning to:

- Improve outcomes for all students, with a particular emphasis on Māori and Pasifika;
- Create the conditions for effective teaching and learning;
- Develop and maintain schools as learning organisations;
- Make connections and build networks within and beyond their schools;
- Develop others as leaders.

(see www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leadership-development/Kiwi-leadership-for-principals/A-model-of-educational-leadership for a full description).

The engine to power this model comes from the *School Leadership and Student Outcomes Best Evidence Synthesis*, which provides a powerful distillation of the currently evidenced dimensions of leadership practice that are most likely to prove effective for student learning, through an intelligent methodology (Robinson et al. 2009). This is more than a synthesis of research: the document provides a resource with pertinent illustrations, case studies and questions that can be used in schools, with professional developers, and by government officials thinking about how to raise capability in schools that they have no direct leverage over.

Eight dimensions and four key aspects of leadership knowledge, skills and dispositions are identified, discussed and illustrated. The leadership dimensions are:

- Establishing goals and expectations;
- Resourcing strategically;
- Planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum;
- Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development;
- Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment;
- Creating educationally powerful connections;
- Engaging in constructive problem talk; and
- Selecting, developing and using smart tools.

The four key leadership, skills and dispositions are:

- Ensuring administrative decisions are informed by knowledge about effective pedagogy;
- Analysing and solving complex problems;
- Building relational trust; and
- Engaging in open-to-learning conversations.

The authors are clear that it is the prevalence of these leadership practices in a given school that matter, and that:

it is unreasonable to expect any one school leader to demonstrate high levels of capability on all the dimensions and their associated knowledge, skills, and dispositions….it is more

reasonable to expect that all New Zealand schools can access high levels of expertise on all the dimensions, and that those who are responsible for appointing and appraising school leaders value and are able to assess such expertise. Where particular expertise is lacking, it should be sourced externally (Robinson et al. 2009, p. 207).

This distinction between leadership practices and the person who is the formal leader of the school has important implications for using the dimensions identified through the best evidence synthesis. They should not be used as literal or checklist performance standards for individuals – they are about the school leadership *as a whole*, not one person. The dimensions are useful for school self-review, and for gaining insight into school processes and ways that people work together that are likely to have positive effects for student (and teacher) learning. In other words, the engine behind the policy fits well into the general policy emphasis on capability building, which has made it easier to insert into the Ministry of Education's leadership development support. It provides a defensible and acceptable way of gaining more consistency in that support.

Uses of the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* and the School Leadership Best Evidence Synthesis

All the Ministry-funded programmes for leadership development are delivered through contracts, and both the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* and the educational leadership best evidence synthesis are highlighted among the criteria that these programmes should meet.

In 2010 the Ministry of Education funded three main programmes for formal school leadership development: the *First Time Principals* programme, which began in 2002, as a national programme, with on-line and local support through mentors who are existing principals; the *Experienced Principals Development* programme, which replaced a programme that took a more 'human resources' approach, utilising 360 degrees feedback, and small groups of principals brought together in residential programmes; and the *National Aspiring Principals Programme*, which is well over-subscribed. These programmes are based on national frameworks for their 'curriculum', but with customisation expected. Evaluations have been used formatively as well as summatively. The evaluation of the *National Aspiring Principals Programme* provided analysis of curricula and provision and participants' experiences against the existing research base on educational leadership development, and principles of adult learning, showing that the programme was largely adequate and effective in the short-term. It also notes that a successful balance was struck between 'national co-ordination' and 'regional interpretation' (Piggott-Irvine and Youngs, in press). All of these programmes also foster opportunities for informal networking among principals and other school leaders involved.

Origins of a Research-Based Tool to Support Both Schools and Policy Development

Two of the leadership development programmes used a new survey-based tool to identify school needs in relation to the educational leadership dimensions identified by the best evidence synthesis. The story of its development testifies to the success of the earlier work in bringing together policymakers, practitioners and researchers to focus on leadership for learning.

This electronic survey of a school's teachers and the principal was designed primarily for formative use in school leadership development – a development focused on practices, rather than individual qualities. It had its origins in a Ministry of Education-led discussion in early 2009 that brought together researchers, sector groups and ERO to examine how the Ministry of Education, and the sector, could evaluate progress on the Ministry's educational leadership strategy. The group included members of the Ministry's External Policy Group (since renamed the Professional Leadership Forum), which was formed from two separate groups, one of the sector representatives, and the other, leadership academics who also led professional development programmes, and a policy researcher (the author).

Bringing these groups together with the Ministry of Education officials working on leadership, to discuss the ongoing development of the Ministry's leadership strategy/plan, proved to be an inspired decision. The quarterly discussions were frank, and they have borne fruit. This gives the members of the group who are not government officials an investment in the aims of the policy, while retaining their ability to raise issues and provide critique. Sector group representatives (the two teacher unions, secondary principals' association, and the school trustees' association) also have roles in collective contract negotiations (pay and conditions) and 'labour market' matters, such as performance standards. Some of the matters covered in those negotiations and side discussions surface in the policy group, but they are not its main focus. The groups overlap through the appointment of particular people, and this overlap is useful in thinking about how to advance leadership for learning – and how not to. Although the approach taken here to create real dialogue and collective knowledge building across research, policy and practice is much easier in a small country like New Zealand, the principle would hold good in other national and sub-national contexts.

The view among this group that a tool to support school leadership was both desirable and feasible signalled that the time taken to include the sector and others in the development of the *Kiwi Leadership for Principals*, and the involvement of the sector and others providing comment in relation to the best evidence synthesis, had paid off. Their view that it was also possible for such a tool to serve both individual school and policy purposes also signalled the reality of the funding available for leadership development, and the need to balance the funding for the creation of 'smart tools' that 'incorporate useful knowledge that can help teachers improve their practice in relation to a specific task' (Robinson et al., 2009, pp. 132–133) with professional development support for as many school leaders as possible. 'Smart tools' include a wide

range of supportive frameworks for learning, including assessments that provide information on progression and help identify 'next steps'. Here the desire for a smart tool was for research-based indicators of leadership practices that school leaders could use to get a robust picture of current school leadership that could inform their strategic discussions about the development of school practices and capacity.

A 'Smart' Tool to Support the Development of Educational Leadership

The development of the *Educational Leadership Practices* survey, an example of the 'smart tools' described above, was undertaken leanly and swiftly, so that it could be used for needs identification in the Experienced Principals' Development programme in late 2009. Viviane Robinson and I used the educational leadership dimensions developed through the best evidence synthesis that Viviane led, to comb through existing questions used in surveys to identify principals' learning needs (e.g. Robinson et al. 2008), and in a range of principal appraisal processes. We also drew on New Zealand research to develop items for a set of contextual questions related to the support principals thought they had for their leadership of learning, and the issues they experienced in focusing on leadership of learning, particularly their other management responsibilities (Wylie 2007). We identified some existing items which could be used, and we created many more new items. The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) trialled the initial survey, which had many more items than needed, with a good cross-section of schools, analysed the reliability and fit of the scales, and their ability to distinguish among schools. Final decisions on the scales came back to Viviane and me to decide the relative importance of some practices and relevant indicators. We reworded items in order to make them clearer or tighter, and reduced the survey to a reasonable length, while maintaining high levels of reliability for each scale. Out of this trial came an overall scale, to which each scale contributed; and the identification of a new scale from items in each of the scales relating to Māori student learning. These items were included in the survey because of the overall policy thrust to improve Māori outcomes (Ministry of Education 2008). They fitted better together than within their original scales.

To illustrate the survey, here are five of the nine items used in the 'Quality of teaching' scale. Teachers and the principal are asked to rate the effectiveness of the school's leadership in ensuring each item on a 5-point scale, ranging from 'outstandingly effective' to 'ineffective'.

- Assessment data are used to improve teaching.
- Appraisal focuses on improving teaching practice and student outcomes.
- Any teaching problems are discussed with a colleague with relevant expertise.
- Early identification and support is provided for teachers who are having difficulty helping students reach important academic and social goals.
- Students provide feedback to teachers on the effectiveness of their teaching.

The full set of scales can be found in Wylie and Hodgen (2010).

Formative Use in Schools

The survey has now been used with over 300 schools, most taking part in the Experienced Principals Development programme. Those signing up to this programme did so on the basis that they would complete the survey. In the event, not all did.

Principals get timely reports – within a week of the school close-off date for teacher completion of the survey. The reports are in graphic form, including the items in each scale and the overall scale in two versions: one of responses from the school's teachers; and one which compares the principal's response with the teachers' responses. The latter has proved particularly interesting for principals where their rating of the effectiveness for school leadership is markedly different from teaching staff. Once the schools had all completed the survey, we were able to provide a comparative reference to the overall pattern for the schools taking part in this particular programme, which gave a wider context for self-review.

The reports are the principals', and they can decide what further use to make of them in their schools. The information sheet about the survey emphasises that these reports are intended for formative use to support school leadership and student learning, and that they are not intended to be used as part of any formal performance appraisal. It also notes that the reports do not need to be shared with the school board, though principals may wish to let their board know how they will be using the results of the survey. ERO does have the legal right to see any school document, including these reports. However, ERO's view was that it would be unlikely to ask for these reports unless it had some concerns about school leadership.

Most of the principals taking part in the Experienced Principals Development programme asked for their school report to go to their professional development provider at the same time as they received it themselves. Feedback so far from both principals and professional development providers indicates that the reports – and more importantly, the discussions around existing school practice that they generate, with school staff, professional development provider, and other principals taking part – have been very useful. These discussions have stimulated the kind of attention to school practices related to teaching and learning that the existing research base supports as being more likely to be effective. They also helped identify school-relevant projects that principals would work on as part of their Experienced Principals Development programme.

The ten different professional development providers for this programme have also been given aggregate pictures of the perceived effectiveness of school leadership practices in their groups of schools (these range from less than 10 schools to close to 100), and these pictures have been used in needs analyses for whole-group sessions and to identify relevant readings.

So this survey tool and the way the results are reported is working as intended, to provide useful pictures of school leadership capability contributing to school leadership development within a local school context. The other side of the survey coin was to provide a wider picture for policy purposes, and this is described next.

Learning About the Prevalence of New Zealand Educational Leadership Capability for Policy Purposes

For the first time, we have an aggregate picture of perceptions of educational leadership capability in New Zealand, in close to 300 schools (Wylie and Hodgen 2010). This is not a representative sample of schools, and it is intended that there be a national sample to develop benchmarks both for schools to situate themselves, and to monitor national progress on developing leadership capability, through periodic sampling.

Analysis shows that the dimensions where school teaching staff see more effective school leadership are most likely to be goal setting, providing a safe and orderly environment, and the principal's personal leadership. They are least likely to identify effective leadership related to teacher learning and development and Māori success dimensions. High scoring schools on the scale are likely to be primary, small, rural, or serving a high socio-economic community. Lower scores for perceptions of the effectiveness of educational leadership are more likely where the school organisation is more complex – secondary schools – or the challenges of the student population are greater. Scores are also somewhat higher for schools where principals give higher ratings to the support they receive for pedagogical leadership, and lower ratings to the barriers they experience in exercising that leadership. Support includes matters such as teacher recruitment and retention, school governors' understanding of matters relating to student achievement, and guidance on the most effective and affordable ways to raise student achievement. Barriers include workload, and other – legitimate – aspects of the New Zealand principal's role, including student welfare issues, staff employment, and providing information to meet external agency requirements.

Once these contextual aspects are taken into account, multilevel modelling shows that only around 10% of the schools had distinctly different scores for perceptions of their educational leadership practices.

The results also show that over half the teachers in the schools taking part in the Experienced Principals Development programme have roles and responsibilities for leading or facilitating staff work beyond their own classrooms. Leadership responsibilities are indeed no longer the sole preserve of the school principal. This picture of more diffuse leadership adds weight to the importance of including leadership practices in professional development that may be about curriculum rather than leadership *per se*. Indeed, some of the examples given in the best evidence synthesis come from evaluations of professional development programmes aimed at improving student outcomes.

Of final interest here is that years of experience as a principal were not associated with teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of school leadership, or the principal's personal leadership. This underlines the importance of ongoing professional development and learning for principals if they are to lead learning, and to lead learning in different school contexts.

Educational Leadership Capability Focus
and the Challenges Ahead

New Zealand now has a reasonable platform for the development of leadership for learning in schools. There is more coherence than there was before the completion of *Kiwi Leadership for Principals* and the Educational Leadership and Student Outcomes Best Evidence Synthesis. There are some challenges to maintaining this platform:

1. Having the capability and processes to learn from the use of these frameworks, and modify them as new learning occurs;
2. Embedding these frameworks more widely into processes of principal appointment and school self-review, but retaining their formative – learning – intent; and
3. Marked tension among primary principals and teachers around the introduction of National Standards for student achievement, particularly around fears related to the use of school comparisons as a prime form of accountability.

Learning from the Use of the Frameworks

Each of the professional development contracts for the Ministry of Education funded leadership development programmes requires reports on the impact of professional development in terms of the criteria for the programme. There is ongoing dialogue between the Ministry of Education and providers on how well different elements of the programme are working, and any issues arising from their judgments. Periodic synthesis across the programmes and open discussion among providers, sectors, the Ministry of Education and researchers would allow more collective knowledge building. This may be difficult, given competition among the providers. But there need to be continuing processes that allow for the ongoing development and shared ownership of the framework, so that it does not revert to being a Ministry of Education document that school leaders put aside because they feel they have no investment in it.

It will also be important to bring a climate of openness to the use of quantitative data, so that they open conversations rather than being treated too literally. For example, the *Educational Leadership Practices survey* is being used at both the start and end of the Experienced Principals Development programme, to provide an analysis of any shifts in scores. Scores could, however, shift down as well as up for a number of valid reasons, including a deepening understanding of particular leadership practices.

Indeed, there is a need for supportive research alongside the use of the *Educational Leadership Practices survey*, to make the most use of it, such as its longitudinal use alongside other data including student achievement trends, school

priorities and levels of support. The survey is soundly based on the existing research, but we need to use it further to build fresh insights, test assumptions, and add to our collective knowledge.

Embedding the Leadership for Learning Framework

There are two ways that the Ministry of Education in its present role vis-à-vis schools can embed the leadership for learning framework: through its contracts with professional development providers and advisory services; and through the guidance given to boards of trustees. It has threaded the framework through professional development programmes and the ongoing support offered until 2011 by the Leadership and Management advisors employed through university School Support Services, which are also funded through government contracts. Most of this ongoing support is targeted to first-time principals and those who have self-identified, or have been identified by the regional ERO or Ministry of Education staff, as struggling.

It is more difficult to embed them in the guidance given to boards of trustees. There is some evidence of the frameworks for leading learning in the new professional standards for principals. The frameworks are mentioned – but not described – in new guidance to boards for the appointing of a principal. Board judgement of the applicant's suitability for the school and its community remains a key aspect in principal appointments. It is not clear that this is always consistent with the knowledge, skills and dispositions suited to leading learning (Wylie 2010).

Care will need to be taken in the way the policy framework, designed to improve capability to lead learning, is threaded into guidance on principal appraisals, if the framework is to retain its formative appeal. Boards often use external people to help with both appointment and performance review, and there is more interest in having some Ministry of Education advice on making appointments. There is some scope for new thinking about how to provide such support in a more systematic way, but that will require some willingness on the part of government to reframe school autonomy.

The leadership policy frameworks have been discussed with ERO, and they are likely to make some appearance in the evaluation criteria that ERO is currently revising for its own and school use. These criteria are comprehensive, with several suggested indicators for each criterion. Not every school review will be able to pay attention to all of them. This raises the perennial question of how to embed frameworks such as this one into processes for support and accountability without creating lists that are too daunting, and end up dissipating effort over too many competing goals (Goren 2009).

Tension Related to New Possibilities for Accountability

The ideal model of school accountability that was envisaged by government in the 1990s was 'tight-loose-tight'.

Under such an arrangement, the goals and missions of the schools are clear (that is, tight), the schools have significant responsibility for how they operate (the loose part), and schools are then held tightly accountable to the centre for outcomes (Fiske and Ladd 2000, p. 68).

The introduction of school planning and reporting in 2001 was intended to obtain greater clarity about goals and missions; and to move schools to greater clarity about their outcomes. There was however, no requirement for uniformity in the reporting of outcomes. This was for a number of reasons: a respecting of school autonomy; a belief that real change required a commitment and capability that would take time to build; and the absence of any national tests. The national curriculum was also under review.

Since then, the Ministry of Education has funded the development of assessment tools for formative use, and existing standardised tests produced by NZCER have been revised. Many of these are now available electronically, with electronic marking and reporting. These assessments are largely focused on literacy and mathematics. Schools are making much more use now of these assessments, both in their reporting to parents, and in their school planning, although there is a considerable way to go in data analysis. The National-led government that was voted into power in late 2008 promised the introduction of national standards, intended to raise student achievement, and to provide parents with more information on their child's achievement. These standards have had to be very rapidly developed to be ready for use in 2010. On the one hand, they are more palatable than a single mandated test, since they are based on overall teacher judgement, using observations and examples of work as well as standardised assessment tools. On the other hand, they are also more demanding of professional knowledge and skills, and point to the need for within-school and between-school moderation, if the premise that these will be consistent across all schools is to be met. The focus on literacy and mathematics, as in most systems, is because these are seen as key to ongoing learning in other areas as well – but these are also the curriculum areas that are most amenable to measurement and therefore take prime place in accountability frameworks. Fears remain that this focus will be at the expense of other curriculum areas and emphases.

The introduction of the National Standards is fraught with difficulty, particularly because of the pace of their development. This did not allow for the gradual acquisition of professional ownership that had been so marked in the leadership for learning policy work and with the new national curriculum. There are fears that their main use will be to make school comparisons (to support parental choice of schools), and to identify schools that will receive Ministry of Education attention. The teaching profession and principals in particular, look overseas to the judgemental regimes in England and the USA, and fear the worst. One small indication of the cost of a judgemental regime for school leadership is the high proportion of headteacher positions needing to be readvertised in England, compared with only a handful in New Zealand. So far, NZEI, the primary teacher union, and the New Zealand Principals' Federation (NZPF) have achieved only a delay in the requirement to report school literacy and mathematics achievement in the form of the national standards till 2012 (just after the next national elections), but schools are being asked to use the standards now, for reporting to parents. NZEI and NZPF are also resisting the provision of student achievement data in electronic form to the Ministry of Education. While the government has said it does not want to create

league tables itself (unlike England, the USA and now Australia), school information is available to the media and the public under the official information act.

The way in which national standards have been introduced is in contrast with the careful previous iterative development of policy to gain sector investment and respect. This contrast is starting to contribute to a new mistrust between the sector and the Ministry of Education, so potentially undermining the gains made in the leadership for learning policy work. Valiant efforts have been made by officials and sector leaders to continue the focus on capability development, and to position the National Standards as a means for more collective inquiry in schools, through the development of guidance and self-review tools. But the necessary associated professional development is limited as government reduces public spending even though many other educational programmes and provisions have been cut to focus on the National Standards. Ministry of Education funded leadership development remains intact for first time and aspiring principals only, with programme criteria now including a focus on the National Standards at primary level, and student engagement and the NCEA at the secondary level.

These three challenges differ in their immediacy and depth. Challenge 3, the tensions arising from new accountabilities based on school comparisons, is perhaps the most fundamental, unless the National Standards are used for system learning (Hattie 2009); and unless the current educational leadership policy's focus on developing capability and providing real opportunities for mutual work and collective knowledge building between the Ministry of Education and the sector is able to be maintained and developed further.

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Chapter 38
Providing Professional Sustenance for Leaders of Learning: The Glass Half Full?

Simon Clarke and Helen Wildy

Introduction

By way of prefacing a chapter that examines the development of Australian school leaders as leaders of learning, we state our foundational belief that there is a need for schools to move away from their traditional emphasis on the management of teaching to leadership for learning. This belief is based on some key assumptions that have influenced the way we understand the leadership of learning and the implications of such an agenda for the professional formation of school leaders, especially principals.

In particular, we argue that the main priority of any school should be to enable the most powerful student learning possible. The efficacy of this learning, however, will be dependent on the utility of teachers' learning within the school as well as organizational learning (Knapp et al. 2003). These three foci are interdependent in a complex variety of ways according to context and require great sensitivity and attention on the part of school leaders. It is becoming clear from the research that leaders are in a strong position to make a difference to children's lives. Indeed, school leadership has been identified as being second only to classroom teaching in its potential to influence student learning (Masters 2008). Therefore, the central contention we are making here is that further advancement of the leadership for learning agenda will hinge to a large extent on the ways in which principals are prepared, developed and supported in their roles.

This chapter first examines aspects of the current education policy environment that offer hope for the advancement of leadership for learning in our schools. We then outline customary arrangements for leadership development before describing some more promising recent initiatives and their acknowledgment of the need for principals to be powerful leaders of learning as well as powerful learners themselves.

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The chapter concludes by identifying the conditions that are most suitable for developing school leaders' agency in asserting a leadership for learning agenda in Australian schools.

Background

In Australia, we have reached a critical juncture in the advancement of leadership for learning that is likely to have a lasting effect on how this ambiguous concept is defined in practice as well as how the professional development of principals is approached. Contributing to this critical juncture is *The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008), that provides an important framework within which the Commonwealth level of government, in cooperation with states and territories, has conceived school improvement initiatives. This document has significant implications for the ways in which school leadership is understood and for the ways in which school leaders are prepared, developed and supported.

The Melbourne Declaration was announced by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in December 2008. *Prima facie*, its intention appears conducive to the promotion of leadership for learning in the nation's schools. This stance is indicative, perhaps, of the credence attributed by education policy makers over recent years to the crucial concepts of 'leadership' and 'learning' (MacBeath et al. 2005) at least at the level of rhetoric. The two goals enshrined in *The Melbourne Declaration* are that:

- Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence; and
- All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals; and active and informed citizens (MCEETYA 2008).

Both goals, it would seem, resonate with an authentic leadership for learning agenda. Furthermore, *The Melbourne Declaration* is accompanied by a 4 year 'Action Plan' for the states, territories and the Commonwealth Government to work together to achieve these important national outcomes. Of particular interest in the context of this chapter is the action directed to 'supporting quality teaching and school leadership'. The Declaration goes on to comment that:

> Excellent teachers have the capacity to transform the lives of students and to inspire and nurture their development as learners, individuals and citizens. They provide an additional source of encouragement, advice and support for students outside the home, shaping teaching around the ways different students learn and nurturing the unique talents of every student (no page number).

In emphasizing the importance of *shaping teaching around the ways different students learn and nurturing the unique talents of every student* there appears to be an implicit recognition of one important dimension of the leadership for learning agenda. In other words, this statement connotes an acknowledgement that the quality of students' learning inside the classroom is inextricably linked to the quality of teachers' learning occurring outside the classroom.

In addition, the Declaration highlights the critical role of school leaders in promoting an environment that is amenable to nurturing a learning culture throughout the school.

> School leaders are responsible for creating and sustaining the learning environment and the conditions under which quality teaching and learning take place (no page number).

Another major commitment of *The Melbourne Declaration* that would appear to bolster an emphasis on the advancement of leadership for learning is the proposed establishment of world-class curriculum and assessment at a national level. This, according to the National Curriculum Board (2009) will be:

> A curriculum for the 21st century [that] will reflect an understanding and acknowledgment of the changing nature of young people as learners and the challenges and demands that will continue to shape their learning in the future. Young people will need a wide and adaptive set of knowledge, skills and understandings to meet the changing expectations of society and to contribute to the creation of a more productive, sustainable and just society (p. 6).

So far then, it would seem that some aspects of the current education policy environment in Australia are favourable to the expansion of leadership for learning. First, is the emergence of an agenda for students' learning influenced by the need to encourage students to be flexible learners with the requisite knowledge, skills and dispositions to learn and to deal with the circumstances of rapid change that characterize our times. Second, there is an apparent acceptance among policy makers that leadership has a profound influence on the motivation and effectiveness of teachers. In similar vein, Shulman (1997, p. 504) has commented that any effort at school reform must ask itself the following:

> As I design this grand plan for improving the quality of learning in students, have I designed with equal care and concern a plan for teacher learning in this setting?

There is also an increased interest in the connection between leadership and student learning and recognition that student academic achievement and engagement are influenced by school leaders.

A further commitment enshrined in *The Melbourne Declaration*, however, is the strengthening of schools' accountability and transparency, which is encapsulated in the excerpt below:

> Schools need reliable, rich data on the performance of their students because they have the primary accountability for improving student outcomes. Good quality data supports each school to improve outcomes for all of their students. It supports effective diagnosis of student progress and the design of high-quality learning programs. It also informs schools' approaches to provision of programs, school policies, pursuit and allocation of resources, relationships with parents and partnerships with community and business (no page number).

Although accountability is clearly important it may be argued that the form in which it is cast above could turn out to be less conducive to leadership for learning than those elements of *The Melbourne Declaration* already discussed. As MacBeath and his colleagues have warned (MacBeath et al. 2007), there is always a danger that an emphasis on accountability can develop in to a high pressure, high-stakes, performativity agenda, which is antithetical to more authentic kinds of learning

such as inquiry, reflection and collegial learning. Indeed, achieving a balance between, on the one hand, the ability to focus on leading learning and, on the other hand, the ability to manage the multiple accountability demands determined by the policy environment is considered a significant challenge in the Australian quest to prepare and support school leaders more effectively (McKenzie et al. 2007). With this challenge in mind, we now turn our attention to customary arrangements for school leadership development in Australia.

Customary Arrangements for Developing School Leaders in Australia

The challenge of achieving the balance between focusing on leading learning and managing multiple accountability demands is compounded by normal arrangements for leadership development in Australia. First, there continues to be a heavy dependence on the traditional apprenticeship model according to which future school leaders are prepared mostly by moving up the ranks from classroom teachers to master teachers to heads of departments and to school principalship (Su et al. 2003). This model is based on an assumption that capable teachers will evolve into effective whole-school leaders without specific or mandatory preparation. Given the increasing complexity of principals' work, especially in connection with leading learning, this seems to be leaving a great deal to chance.

Second, arrangements for the preparation, development and support of school leaders have varied considerably from one state to another as well as between educational jurisdictions. Some states, such as Western Australia and South Australia, have leadership centres. Some educational jurisdictions provide courses related to preparation for leadership, some have induction processes, some have programmes of support for specific issues (APPA 2003).

These disjointed arrangements for school leadership development have tended to blur the focus on leading learning. To begin with, it is difficult to establish a professional consensus as to what it means to be a school leader, especially as it applies to leadership for learning. There is also a danger, as Dempster has pointed out (2001), that the learning and development of school leaders will be drawn towards system initiatives, priorities and policies, rather than concentrating on what practising professionals require of themselves and their colleagues. Dempster has elaborated on this observation by developing a theoretical framework for professional development, which is particularly pertinent to principals' learning. Although this framework was developed several years ago, it is still capable of providing insights into how principals' experiences of professional development can either nurture or debilitate capacity in leadership for learning.

Put simply, Dempster defines four orientations to professional development: system maintenance, system restructuring, professional sustenance and professional

transformation. These orientations are deemed to promote a system focus or people focus on human activity and two views of change: reproduction and reconstruction.

According to Dempster, a system maintenance orientation 'enables principals to gain the necessary functional knowledge and skills to carry out everyday tasks' (2001, p. 5). As such, principals' learning tends to be competency based and linked to the policies and priorities prescribed by the central authority. A system restructuring orientation is focused on learning about system change which entails principals' ability to pursue efficiency and effectiveness in implementing government priorities and system objectives. The focus here is on how to make changes to the structure and function of schools in system-determined directions. For this purpose, the gathering and use of system-stipulated performance data is emphasized.

These orientations are dependent on the initiative and support of system administrators and tend to perpetuate existing arrangements through a reproductive form of in-service education. One could argue therefore, that these conditions are inimical to the support of leadership for learning. First, they foster a responsibility among principals to concentrate on transactional activities that meet system requirements. Second, this orientation towards professional development is unlikely to encourage principals' critical reflection on practice. If, as MacBeath (2006, p. 45) has suggested, leadership and learning are 'bound together by the responsibility they take for organizing, producing and creating knowledge and for the challenge they offer to inert ideas and conventional wisdom', an alternative approach to principals' learning would seem desirable.

To this end, Dempster advocates that the professional development of school leaders should be based on professional sustenance and professional transformation orientations. Both are dependent on personal initiative and the support of colleagues rather than from the system. A professional sustenance orientation is predicated on self-determination and encourages collegial dialogue around issues and concerns arising from the day-to-day realities of school leadership. A professional transformation orientation, as its terminology would suggest, is concerned with learning about alternatives to system orthodoxy. It seeks to empower staff and school communities to harness socially constructive change.

If schools are to be places where leadership is embedded in collaborative processes of learning the role of the symbolic leader or principal is crucial for 'the leader is the critical change agent – the guardian and facilitator of transitions' (Hopkins and Jackson 2003, p. 101). From this perspective, it appears imperative that attention should be given to professional sustenance and professional transformation orientations in the process of principals' learning.

Taking cognizance of Dempster's theoretical framework for professional development, we now describe some promising initiatives that are occurring at the local and national level in Australia. These seem to go some way to supporting principals in their leadership of learning. The scope and complexity of this task means that we have been very selective in our commentary.

Some Local Initiatives to Support Leadership of Learning

For several years now, most school authorities across the country have used standards and competency frameworks to inform the professional development of principals and in some cases for their selection and promotion as well (Dempster 2001). More recently, however, there has been a shift in the focus of these frameworks from competency-based training to leadership development according to capabilities (Duignan 2006).

Increasingly, frameworks are emphasizing the personal dimension of leadership as well as leading learning in the context of the school, and capabilities that are likely to support leadership of learning. For example, The *School Leadership Capability Framework* (SLCF) has been developed by the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education and Training in collaboration with the NSW Secondary Principals' Council and the NSW Primary Principals' Association. It is based on the results of research conducted with 322 effective NSW principals. Similar leadership capability frameworks have been developed in Queensland and Victoria insofar as they seek to connect capabilities more directly to the improvement of teaching, learning and students' outcomes in schools. The fundamental purpose of the frameworks is also, purportedly, to support the development of school leaders to create and sustain effective learning environments, rather than making them accountable for system requirements.

These examples intimate that employing authorities are beginning to embrace the notion that leadership development cannot be determined exclusively by the functional requirements of the system. It requires approaches that are more likely to encourage the formation of school leaders equipped to take responsibility for the learning of others. In other words, a shift in thinking has become discernible from system maintenance and restructuring orientations to professional sustenance and transformation.

Some National Initiatives to Support Leadership of Learning

In accordance with the people focus that is fundamental to professional sustenance and transformation, together with its emphasis on individual and collective power and action (Dempster 2001), some recent national initiatives in leadership development are also noteworthy. An especially promising approach in the national conversation about school leadership has been the *Leaders Lead* project. The current *Principals Australia* web site (Principals Australia 2009) describes how the first phase of this project, *Leaders Lead: Strengthening the Australian School*, began in 2001–2002. It comprised a programme of national and state/territory seminars and workshops focusing on what it means to be a school leader. This process brought together school leaders from throughout Australia as well as from across the sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent Schools) and provided an opportunity to tackle the 'big picture' issues that individual education systems and sectors are

thought to neglect. The leadership discourse, therefore, began to move beyond familiarization with operational issues that are often pre-eminent to consideration of the full complexity of school leadership (APAPDC 2002).

The first phase of the *Leaders Lead* project was regarded as an effective exercise in harnessing the collective voice of school leaders from many different contexts and it began a process of conceptualizing a nationally agreed view of what contemporary school leadership entails. This stance on school leadership was integrated into the APAPDC Educational Leadership Model developed in response to the issues and concerns generated in the first phase of the project. The model identified four domains of educational leadership (curriculum and pedagogy, organizational leadership and management, political and community leadership, cultural and wise leadership) and associated competencies, and was used as the framework for the focus of the second phase of the project *Succession Planning: Building Leadership Capacity for Australian Schools*.

Apart from its national significance, the model, it has been argued (APAPDC 2002), represented a change in thinking about school leadership in two main respects. First, the model was purported to sharpen the focus from the individual school principal to what schools as a whole need from educational leadership. In doing so, there was an implicit recognition that leadership development should not be preoccupied with positional authority, 'opening the way for the principalship to be redefined and restructured' (APAPDC 2002, p. 1). Second, the model positions students' learning and development as the main object of school leadership. From this perspective, the model reflects a shift from a managerial understanding of leadership to one that is more visionary and collegial and which focuses on the centrality of student learning. As a result, it has the potential to provide a basis for developing approaches to principals' professional learning that support and promote leadership for learning.

This potential has also been partly evident in the second phase of the *Leaders Lead* project conducted in 2002–2003, *Succession Planning: Building Leadership Capacity for Australian Schools* which is also described on the *Principals Australia* web site (Principals Australia 2009). The key aims of this phase of the project are to develop a theoretical framework for succession planning and a practical tool that can support principals and leadership teams in building leadership capacity in their schools. To this end, a professional development resource, *Learn, Lead, Succeed,* was developed for the use of principals and leadership teams in their schools, as well as by individual aspirant leaders. It is primarily aimed at preparing aspiring educational leaders for positional leadership in schools, though it is also claimed to be equally applicable for the development of teacher leaders. The framework consists of five propositions:

1. Leadership starts from within;
2. Leadership is about influencing others;
3. Leadership develops a rich learning environment;
4. Leadership builds professionalism and management capability; and
5. Leadership inspires leadership actions and aspirations in others (APAPDC 2007).

These propositions have been designed to facilitate a deeper knowledge of the components of school leadership, how it is grounded in understandings of wellbeing, and how it can be developed at individual and organizational levels. They signal a deeper knowledge and understanding about the nexus between the professional, interpersonal and personal demands of leadership and the professional and personal capabilities required to ensure that quality is widespread and integral to the school culture (APAPDC 2007).

The *Principals Australia* web site (2009) reports that from 2003–2005, over 3,000 principals and other school leaders participated in workshops and other sessions, engaging with the five propositions and their accompanying resource, *Learn Lead Succeed.* This degree of engagement from leaders across all states and territories, areas, sectors and schools has engendered a strong endorsement and refinement of the Five Principles (The L5 Frame) and the accompanying professional development resources which are now used by a large number of school leaders throughout Australia.

Another notable framework, because of its national significance and its potential application to leadership for learning is the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) Leadership Capability Framework. This Framework was launched in 2009 and is designed to support different leaders with various spheres of influence, for example, those who are starting to exercise leadership in a small setting and those whose influence extends far wider across schools and their communities (Lewis 2009). The Framework is organized under three headings:

1. Leading self for learning;
2. Leading others for learning; and
3. Leading the organization for learning.

In addition, the Framework is underpinned by explicit principles, the result of dialogue with the professional community and analysis of the research literature (Lewis 2009). In respect of leadership for learning, three of these principles seem to be particularly pertinent. First is the need to give priority to the moral purpose of education and educational leadership so that the needs of the students come first. Second, is the promotion of a new 'evidence-based paradigm' of educational leadership and leadership learning. Third, is the generation of needs-based learning suited to different school contexts and career development stages.

Although at the time of writing, it is far too early to evaluate the efficacy and impact of the ACEL Leadership Capability Framework, the intention of the Framework to connect directly with the capabilities required for improving learning and student outcomes in schools is encouraging.

A further potentially significant national initiative for supporting leadership for learning, has been the Commonwealth Government's establishment of a National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership (NIQTSL), which reflected a high level of cooperation amongst the professional community. The Commonwealth provided an initial $10 million to set up the Institute that was launched officially in June 2004. NIQTSL was located in the national capital, Canberra, on the campus of the Australian National University (ANU), a site that, it was hoped, would promote the Institute's intention to forge close links with the university sector.

Following the launch of the interim NIQTSL, the organization was established by the Howard Government as an independent body, *Teaching Australia – the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership* (TA). A further $20 million was received from the Commonwealth Government in order to make progress with its key initiatives.

One of these key initiatives was the articulation of a national set of capabilities for school leaders. In spite of the slow progress made in this direction, the management-consulting firm Hay Group, in conjunction with the University of Melbourne, was commissioned in 2005 to design and deliver a national leadership programme entitled *Leading Australia's Schools*. The national scope of this programme was a first for Australia. The programme was designed and developed in collaboration with national principals' associations and launched in 2006 with the broad aim of improving the knowledge and leadership skills of Australia's school leaders into the future. The programme has catered for two cohorts a year of 40 early-career principals selected from all sectors, levels of schooling, states and territories.

The 3-month course consists of preparation work, a 5-day residential workshop, a school-based challenge project followed by a 2-day residential recall session and the development of an ongoing learning community. The course is also guided by five themes:

1. The nature and challenge of leadership;
2. Myself as leader;
3. Leading a learning organization;
4. Myself as a leader in education; and
5. Myself as a leader of the future (Teaching Australia 2007).

These five themes suggest that the *Leading Australia's Schools* programme is grounded in sophisticated knowledge and understanding as to the nexus between the professional, interpersonal and personal demands of leadership, as well as the professional and personal capabilities that are required to exercise effective and sustainable leadership for learning. The programme has now been running for 4 years and has been found to be popular with the principals who have participated over that time. In particular, the value of cohort based, cross-sectoral groupings of principals for professional learning has been acknowledged, as has the sequenced modular design interspersed with network support and opportunities for practice, trialling and development of ideas and approaches (Atelier Learning Solutions 2007). This national initiative, however, although laudable in intent, has little likelihood of meeting the needs of 10,000 principals spread across the vast continent of Australia. Its scale is small, providing leadership development opportunities only for early-career principals, and for a mere 80 leaders each year. The prospect of extending this provision to cater for experienced principals and those in need of pre-appointment preparation remain speculative.

In some ways then, this seems to be an exciting time for school leadership in Australia (Hinton 2005). Certainly, it is evident that there has been progress towards an emerging consensus within the broader education profession about what it means to be a school leader in the contemporary schooling environment and what this understanding engenders for the preparation and development of school leaders

now and in the future. This is borne out in leadership frameworks and recent approaches to the development and support of school leaders that are not being determined exclusively by the functional requirements of the system. Rather, there is an emerging commitment to the formation of school leaders who have the knowledge, skills and dispositions to take responsibility for the learning of others.

A Heuristic Tool for Connecting with Leadership for Learning

Investigating the efficacy of preparation and development of school principals has been an important component of our own work. We have been researching the broad theme of the principalship for two decades.[1] More recently our research has focused on the work of principals of small schools,[2] and our latest area of interest has been the initial preparation of principals.

Over the years, our interpretive approach to investigating the principalship has yielded a rich and realistic portrayal of Australian principals' day-to-day work from the perspectives of practitioners themselves. This comprehensive depiction of the problems, issues and challenges principals encounter and the ways in which these are handled, together with reflections on their experiences, has enabled us to articulate a conceptual framework with four focal points for informing processes of preparation – *place, people, system and self.* We believe that this framework has potential to be used as a heuristic tool for dealing with the realities of the principal's world and the professional knowledge, skills and dispositions that are required to perform their work effectively. In doing so, it also has the capacity to support the focus on leadership for learning as well as provide professional sustenance for school leaders. Hence, this conceptual framework is premised on the belief that principals not only need to be powerful leaders of learning, but they also need to be powerful learners themselves.

Having the knowledge and understanding of *place* means that school leaders are able to read the complexities of their context, especially the people, the problems and issues, as well as the culture of the school and the community in which it is located. The necessity to be 'contextually literate' (NCSL 2007) is especially pertinent to the small, remote schools that we have investigated, but applies to all contexts insofar as it facilitates leaders' capacity to determine the school's priorities and interests, particularly in connection with leadership for learning. At the broader level, this 'literacy' entails familiarity with the socio-economic, demographic, cultural and historical composition of the community which governs the intake of the

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[1] For example, Wildy and Dimmock (1993), Wildy et al. (2004), Wildy and Louden (2000), and Wildy and Wallace (1995).

[2] For example, Clarke and Stevens (2004), Clarke and Wildy (2004), Clarke et al. (2007, 2006); Wildy and Clarke (2005, 2008); Wildy et al. (2007).

school. At the school level, it means acquiring data about students' achievement and progress, turning it into useful information and ultimately into strategies for action. In other words, if student learning is to be at the focus of school leadership, principals require the ability to read the contextual circumstances so they can act in ways which are responsive to the situation.

In its original conceptualization, having the knowledge, understanding and skill to deal with *people* meant that school leaders should be able to handle a range of complex interactions on a day-to-day basis with diverse constituent groups, such as staff, parents, Department personnel, and community members. These interactions highlight the importance of the interpersonal, political and ethical dimensions of the principal's role and the need to understand human nature and the motivations of individuals (Begley 2008). More important in connection with leadership for learning, however, is the significance of *people* for its application to the development of human agency. Given the recent focus on the notion of distributed leadership (Bush and Jackson 2002) for facilitating school improvement, the ability of principals to cultivate positive and productive relationships seems to be an especially vital consideration in the formation of principals (Duignan 2006). Indeed, these are the processes that are amenable to a distributed model of leadership generated as it is from the interactions and dynamics prompted by groups and teams learning together (Harris 2003).

The efficacy of distributed leadership will depend on the extent to which leadership is perceived to be invited necessitating that messages are communicated to people promoting their worth. According to Stoll and Fink (1996, p. 109), invitational leadership is anchored on four basic tenets. The first is referred to as optimism, or the assumption that people have untapped potential for growth and development. The second is respect, which is manifested in vigorous discussion and reasoned dissent. The third is trust in people to behave as though they are able, worthwhile and responsible. Finally, the fourth tenet requires leaders to be intentionally supportive, caring and encouraging. The combination of these tenets in use helps to create an environment in which the energy and creativity of others are released.

It is in these ways that a professional learning community is more likely to be established, one in which there are sustained conversations around the improvement of pedagogical practice. For example, Trimper (2009) reports that the key link in her pilot project is the investigation of how principals can engage their staff in analysing and reflecting on their teaching practice. For this purpose, principals are learning how to conduct disciplined dialogues with their teachers, starting from an evidence base and focusing on the work that each teacher does in a classroom.

Having the knowledge, understanding and skill to deal with the education authority, or *system*, means that school leaders are able to navigate their way, through complex and often quite baffling, bureaucratic regulations, policies and protocols. Dealing with the system, therefore, takes not only functional knowledge, understanding and skill but also confidence, determination and political sophistication. In the more specific context of leadership for learning, this political sophistication may lead to an ability to adapt external system imperatives in accordance with the internal purposes of the school.

The ability of school leaders to go beyond following system prescription is at the heart of achieving the balance between developing the capability to focus on leading learning and the competency to manage multiple accountability demands. To this end, the use of data and evidence is an increasingly important dimension of educational decision-making (Earl et al. 2002). Certainly 'data literate' principals who can collect, interpret and use data effectively have a capacity to contribute to system policy and enhance the intelligence of accountability at that level.

However, just as importantly data literacy is also critical within the school itself so that schools are able to 'know themselves, do it for themselves and give their own account of their achievement' (MacBeath 1999, p. 2). In this connection, Earl's (2005, p. 7) distinction between what she describes as 'real' accountability and accounting is instructive. According to Earl, accounting is 'gathering, organizing and reporting information that describes performance'. Accountability, however, is defined as 'the conversation about what information means and how it fits with everything we know and about how to use it to make positive changes'. Earl, in fact, goes further and suggests that accountability is intertwined with 'a moral and professional responsibility to be knowledgeable and fair in teaching [and learning] and in interactions with students and their parents'. Earl and Fullan (2003), however, suggest that school leaders lack confidence in understanding and using data and if they do use data it tends to be for 'accounting' purposes rather than improving teaching and learning (Shen and Cooley 2008).

In our original thinking, looking after the *self* referred mainly to having the personal resilience for the job. This is because we have found that the level of personal resilience required to deal with the complexities of school leadership is widely underestimated by principals, especially when they are novices. From this perspective, self-knowledge and the ability to contextualize, understand, accept and deal with the emotional demands of the job is a key focus of our framework for preparing, supporting and developing school leaders.

The significance of *self*, however, extends beyond considerations of principals' well-being and also takes into account their values and intentions. This is what Duignan (2006, p. 143) has referred to as personal formation and transformation, which engenders a deep understanding of personal values and a conviction that leadership is concerned fundamentally with developing the capacity of colleagues and students.

In connection with self, Duignan (2006) goes on to suggest that principals also need to be open to new ways of thinking and doing in order to maximize their influence on curriculum, pedagogy, and learning. This suggestion resonates with Dempster's observation (2009) that at the heart of leadership for learning is a well-defined sense of moral purpose. As he points out, 'principals are not there to make students' lives worse, they are there to see that schools concentrate on improving students' learning and ultimately their achievement' (no page number).

Perhaps in order to impress upon school leaders the imperative of moral purpose for fostering leadership for learning it would be desirable to have more discussion of 'bad' leadership. This debate as Higgs (2009) has pointed out, is premised on the assumption that leader traits are more significant factors in the emergence of 'bad'

leadership than inadequate skills and has focused recently on the concept of narcissism. Narcissistic leadership in its most destructive form can have a profoundly debilitating effect on leading learning because leaders of this ilk often fail to create an appropriate culture within the school for developing student and teacher capacity.

Some Principles for Supporting School Leaders' Learning

We have already stated our belief that our framework – *place, people, system* and *self* – has potential to be used as a heuristic tool for dealing with the complexities of leadership for learning and the professional knowledge, skills and dispositions required to perform this essential aspect of a principal's responsibility effectively. In this respect, the framework has two key strengths. First, there is an emphasis on dealing with people and relationships – a key focus of leadership as opposed to management. Second, and related, the framework is grounded in the realities of the school as a complex workplace. Consequently, the framework is fundamentally descriptive rather than one which is integral to a normative theory or model. We believe the approach we have adopted to developing our framework can offer clearer direction to practitioners because it has been based initially on a consideration of 'what is' rather than 'what ought to be'.

A corollary to our argument that principals need to work effectively as leaders for learning within the realities of schools as organizations is that their learning must be embedded in the myriad activities that transpire daily in the job and entail translating theory into practice. Although, it is beyond the remit of this chapter to engage in a lengthy discussion about the pedagogy of principals' learning and development, it is important to identify some fundamental design principles that can be used to educate principals in their primary role of leading learning.

In general terms, we would argue that processes should reflect a sophisticated knowledge of adult learning and a recognition that the complex work of school leadership requires not only hands-on practice, but also extensive critique of and reflection on that practice. More specifically, the design principles underpinning the successful professional development of school leaders in leading learning may be illustrated with reference to the *Principals as Literacy Leaders* (PALL) project that is beginning to gain some traction in parts of Australia.

PALL is designed to develop the capabilities of principals as effective literacy leaders. It addresses the fundamental question of what capabilities principals need in literacy teaching and learning, as well as in school leadership, in order to improve student literacy achievement in low SES school communities. The project assists principals to examine student achievement information, to design and implement literacy improvement in their schools, and to lead a professional learning community so as to sustain improvement and support local and system-wide developments. The project involves the development and trialling of a series of leadership modules

with 60 primary principals selected from low SES school communities in Queensland, the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

The project's principles not only provide clear glimpses of instructional methods most likely to facilitate school leaders' capacity to lead learning, but they also suggest ways in which this agenda might be pursued more effectively in the future.

The PALL Project is based on the following principles (the key elements of these principles have been highlighted by the researchers in the project's initial conceptualization):

- *Evidence*-based understandings about effective leadership, strategic change management and effective literacy teaching and learning;
- *Respect* for and understanding of the *diverse* and *challenging* school and community contexts in which leaders and teachers are working;
- The *centrality* of the concept of *partnership* between practitioners and those working in support and training and development roles;
- Appreciation of the need for *support* and development opportunities to be *proximal* (close to the school context), *spaced* (to allow for practice), *ongoing* (room for mentoring and coaching) and *connected* (based on real world issues problems, contexts and cases);
- *Blending* of *concept* and *content* knowledge – in leadership and literacy arenas (Principals as Literacy Leaders (PALL 2009, pp. 6–7).

At their simplest level, these principles serve as a reminder that the fundamental purpose of school leadership is to promote learning. Masters (2008, no page number) has expressed this priority well in his comment that:

> As professionals and educational leaders we need a deep understanding of our core business – learning; what is it? What happens when people learn? What are the conditions that support learning? In a sense, we can't know too much about learning.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that although our conceptual framework discussed earlier was generated from principals' own perspectives of their experiences, learning *per se* did not emerge as a focal point. Perhaps, because principals are normally experienced and accomplished classroom teachers, they consider that the requisite knowledge, understanding and skills to lead learning have been acquired before entering the principal's office. We would argue, therefore, that the connection between leadership and learning needs to be emphasized far more in the formation of school principals. One way of accomplishing this, as Duignan and Hurley (2007) have pointed out, is to align leadership frameworks more explicitly to enhancing teaching, learning and student outcomes. As we have previously indicated in this chapter, there are some promising signs that this is already happening in various education contexts throughout the country.

Another significant principle of the PALL project is the use of a strong evidence base. Without wishing to engage in a lengthy debate about the efficacy of evidence-based practice, the importance of properly researched evidence as a basis for leadership policy and practice is uncontentious. The utility of data, however, is always dependent on human interpretation (Earl and Fullan 2003). It is vital, therefore, that

school leaders are given the opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills to use data for improving teaching and learning. In the current policy context in which a focus on leading learning has to be balanced with managing multiple accountability demands (McKenzie et al. 2007), this is a key consideration. Data literate principals are more likely to embrace accountability to promote a leadership for learning agenda by scrutinizing information and evaluating how it fits with what is already known about the school context and about how it can be used to implement improvements.

However, in the Australian setting, it is the PALL principle of *partnership* between practitioners and those working in support and training and development roles that will equip principals with the skills and confidence as leaders of learning. As we have commented, the disjointed arrangements for school leadership development that have been customary in this country have tended to blur the focus on leading learning and draw it towards system initiatives, priorities and policies.

It is self-evident that if the promotion of leading learning is to be pursued consistently across the country, there is a need for strategic partnerships especially between employers, professional bodies, and universities. As O'Brien et al. (2003) have observed, employers have an obligation to hold principals accountable for the quality of their work and they often have expertise in key areas of development and support such as induction programmes. Professional associations bring an understanding of issues and challenges that are embedded in practice while universities have access to international 'best practice' and can make a different sense of the situation beyond the experience of those who are in it.

One current example of such a strategic partnership, which we have alluded to earlier, is the *Leading Australia's Schools* programme, a national university-accredited leadership programme for principals from government and non-government schools in all states and territories. This programme is offered by Teaching Australia (now renamed The Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership) in partnership with the Hay Group and the University of Melbourne and has the support of the national professional associations for principals, who co-badge the programme. The intention is that the programme draws on the Hay Group's global research and experience in leadership development, the University of Melbourne's extensive research and teaching background in Australian education, and the national professional associations for principals' advice on programme design, content and delivery (Teaching Australia 2009).

This is the kind of collaborative approach, spanning jurisdictions and sectors, that is more likely to challenge current thinking on leading learning and provide an environment for principals' professional sustenance and transformation of the sort that Dempster (2001) has advocated. It is also this kind of collaboration that promises to make approaches to leadership for learning more integrated. In Australia, where there is greater potential for disparate approaches to developing the capacity of school leaders than tends to be the case in smaller countries, this remains a key challenge if authentic leadership for learning is to gain ascendancy in our schools.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have argued that, at least as far as Australia is concerned, a defining moment has been reached in the progress of leadership for learning, especially in equipping school leaders to take responsibility for the learning of others. In doing so, we have adopted an optimistic position in our evaluation of pertinent developments that have occurred over recent years in this country. In particular, we have suggested that the rhetoric of the policy makers has become more amenable to the pursuit of leadership for learning in the country's schools with their recognition that principals need to be powerful leaders of learning. We have also indicated that initiatives have evolved at both state and national levels that assist principals to be powerful learners themselves by providing them with appropriate professional sustenance. From this perspective the leadership for learning glass appears to be half full.

From a half empty perspective, however, Bush and Jackson (2002, p. 427) have pointed out that speculation about the future of school leadership development is a risky venture at the best of times as arrangements tend to be so varied. The nature of these arrangements, of course, will depend to some extent on the tide of accountability that is intrinsic to school reform efforts in this country. We have argued that this agenda is not antithetical to leadership for learning, but can be turned to positive use through school leaders' agency facilitated by plentiful opportunities for related professional learning, development and support.

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Chapter 39

Leadership for Effective School Improvement: Support for Schools and Teachers' Professional Development in the Latin American Region

Inés Aguerrondo and Lea Vezub

Introduction

The characteristics of effective schools have been extensively studied and are well understood. While school improvement covers a diversity of actions, research stresses the importance of school leadership, teaching quality and learning. Educational reform in turn is concerned with effective schools, not just the development of some effective schools, but the achievement of good results in most of the school system.

The overall improvement of schools requires strengthening of both the education system's governance as well as the leadership role of principals, school supervisors and teachers, enabling them to focus on improving outcomes for all students. At the heart of improvement, as argued by Levin and Fullan (2008), lays the change in the teaching and learning practices in thousands of classrooms, requiring in turn focused and sustained efforts from all parts of the education system. This means enhancing the role of teachers, fostering their professional development, redefining and strengthening the role of school principals while developing adequate support for teachers and schools to enable them to obtain better learning results.

However, this is not easy to achieve. In their recent book, Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) review various past ways of carrying out educational change and propose a fourth one. The first three ways include (1) top-down state support and professional freedom, allowing for not only innovation but also inconsistency; (2) market competition and top-down educational standardization in which professional autonomy is lost; and (3) a path that navigates between and beyond the market and state, balancing professional autonomy with accountability. The fourth proposed way advocates parallel innovative and effective networks, coached by district officials (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009) and a tri-level system of educational management including school, district and central governments (Levin 2010).

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> Thus, for a system to become more effective, there needs to be a new balance between schools and their environment. In Latin America this includes the restructuring of the state apparatus (MoE) and a redefinition of the roles of agents who operate directly with the school, basically known as traditional supervision. This new balance also implies a need for the professional development of teachers.

Beginning in the last decades of the twentieth century, many countries initiated changes to the governance and administration of their school systems, as a consequence of decades of reforms that had promised change but which did not have the expected results. The majority of Latin American countries became engaged in educational reforms, which affected the central administration of education, mostly on the basis of models advocated by the New Public Management (NPM) approach (Osborne and Gaebler 1992).

> The main idea of this paradigm was that the State adopted a new operational logic, away from the traditional Weberian perspective and closer to the private sector… [through the introduction] of different tools implemented with success in the private sector. These included strategic planning, results-based management, decentralization and delegation of responsibilities. (Abal Medina 2008, p. 12)

One reason for these reforms was the conviction that former reform efforts had failed to succeed because they had not reached the schools or because of the gap between "what policymakers say and what teachers do" (Cuban 2008, p. 7). What once operated as a successful "power transmission belt" of central directives to the institutions had been broken; while personnel working in schools (principals, teachers) did not seem to have the necessary skills to respond professionally to varied and complex education requirements at a time of great changes in both the provision of educational services and social demands on schools. Thus various strategies are now being used to address these diagnoses. These strategies attach great importance both to school supervision and to the professional development of teachers.

From the mid-twentieth century, Latin America witnessed a strong and successful expansion of schooling, which included new social sectors and groups. In parallel, different types of educational institutions emerged, some offering quality education and others with far less satisfactory results. This generated one of the most undemocratic features of present day Latin America: the segmentation of education into circuits of dissimilar quality operating in parallel and serving different social groups that have little opportunity to move from one to the other. This process characterized as differentiating-expansion (Braslavsky 1985) requires a different kind of school improvement in each case. It also requires changes in the control systems and monitoring of quality, so as to ensure that all the region's children and youth have access to satisfactory teaching and learning processes.

This regional challenge can be summarized by the notion that a traditional system, designed to reach uniformity, must now be reorganized into one that serves heterogeneity. A general difficulty for this to occur is that decentralization and accountability at lower levels of state bureaucracy is alien to the Latin American tradition of Napoleonic governance. The historical model of organization of school systems in Latin America has been based on the Napoleonic definition of the State as a bureaucratic and hierarchical structure in which each level is

responsible for control of the level below (Haggard 1998; Borón 2003). Today, both the bureaucratization of school governance, and the volatility of external conditions calling for greater differentiation and specialization in the services offered, has imposed the need for change. Thus, on the basis of the breakdown of the hierarchical State's capacity to respond to needs, the trend is now for more direct relations between institutions and levels of decision and policy management.

The consequences of the hierarchical model are well known. One of the recognized causes of the decline in educational quality is that the vertical and bureaucratic organization of education systems has not allowed for teaching to be adapted to the unique needs of beneficiaries. On the other hand, several decades of experiences with decentralization show that these processes are also not a panacea. Filmus (1998) notes that decentralization policies in Latin America have been subject to one or other of four underlying conflicting rationales: *economic* logic tied to fiscal adjustment; a *technocratic* logic aimed at controlling processes; a *participatory democratic* logic that increases local power sharing; and finally a *pedagogic* rationale that regards these processes as a tool for quality improvement.

In Latin America, the discourse of decentralization/deconcentration, usually subject to the logic of fiscal adjustment, has been strongly controversial, as it has often meant a retreat of the State from its social responsibilities "without development of strategies for the community to create participatory alternatives that would prevent the growth of inequality and poverty" (Filmus 1998, p. 3). This has meant prioritizing administrative aspects over pedagogic reform, and giving greater importance to governance matters over those related to education quality (Tedesco 1998). Two decades of efforts to apply the effective school model have shown "that school autonomy, without pedagogic authority, result in institutional abandonment, implying that the role of the State is more important than ever" (del Castillo and Azuma 2009, p. 44). The State needs to move from being a mere provider of services to coordinating the actions of multiple actors and levels, all this in the broader context of State reform and of National Public Management policies.

The question is what type of State in Latin America can undertake the education reform process satisfactorily? In this chapter we explore two educational strategies found in the region which involve active State intervention to create conditions to improve educational quality in schools. The first one concerns external processes (changes in the conceptions and practices of supervision/inspection) and the second one refers to processes internal to schools (professional development of teachers).

Development of Educational Supervision and Professional Development in Latin America

Since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with the emergence of national states and modern educational systems in Latin America, specific supervisory mechanisms were established to support the work of schools and teachers. Each country's specific procedures were different in line with national traditions

and the general structure adopted by the central administration (whether centralized or decentralized), with inspection playing a key role. Originally inspection's main responsibility was to supervise schools and ensure the proper establishment and implementation of education policies (Terigi 2009). Also in the context of homogeneous systems, governed by normative guidelines, an important function was to connect the central levels of education with schools.

Initially the education inspectorate was associated more with the tasks of administrative control and proper compliance with the rules and laws than with support, a role which originated in Europe in the early nineteenth century[1] and adopted accordingly by Latin-American education systems. The school inspection model was effective in the early stages of the education systems as it allowed for the gradual increase of educational coverage and expansion of the modern education system. However, it operated at the cost of excluding large sectors of population and of denying the cultural patterns of native peoples or immigrant communities. These people, for the sake of inclusion, were forced to learn a language and a national history, on the grounds of a supposed essential and shared national identity (Puiggrós 1990; Romero 2004).

Gradually, the roles of inspectors became more specialized and separate from those of teachers, thus providing another example of the hierarchical structure of educational administration. In a context where concrete realities could only be known through physical presence, the fundamental working tool of inspectors became the *inspection visit*, the direct observation of schools, and the communication of required *inspection reports* to higher authority. A key aspect of a visit was to observe the state of school buildings, the hygiene of premises and transmit health guidelines to prevent diseases and infections. Another important task was to update educational statistics, to verify the number of those registered, to make note of absences and actual numbers of children who attended classes (Dussel 1995). In addition the inspectors provided the principals of the examined schools with a series of recommendations or suggestions, in order for them to correct the deviations noted in the visit.

The lack of qualified teachers in the early national public education systems, in line with the ideas of the time, defined the inspectors' monitoring and evaluation tasks as primarily addressed to teachers rather than to the operation of the education system and its institutions (Dussel 1995). The historical development of inspection systems also showed an early tension between control functions (centered in compliance with regulations) and advisory functions oriented to solving the difficulties encountered.

These frictions increased in the early 1960s due to the growth, complexity and diversification of school systems, the extension of compulsory schooling and the incorporation of new social groups into secondary education – all factors that modified the control and support needs of schools. As education quality began to suffer, the function of inspectors took on an increasing pedagogic emphasis.

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[1] The position of "general inspector of studies" first appeared in French legislation. Spain's Royal Decree of 1849 created the body of overseers or visitors and established regulations to monitor primary education.

The name of *inspector* was changed to *supervisor* and their responsibilities were broadened so as to cover pedagogic issues.

Mediation between the school and political authorities was however the function that more critically was altered in this process. With changes in the institutionalization of the state and the bureaucratization of the state apparatus, supervisors/inspectors became the focus of resistance to both public policy and innovation at school level.

Historical research on the *mechanisms of professional development* of teachers shows that these have been a concern of education authorities, from the beginnings of Latin America's education systems (Vezub 2009). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the work of teachers, their training and certification, began to be regulated by the state. A big concern was the limited numbers of teachers with a professional credential and the need to provide them with a scientific knowledge base and pedagogic techniques. Various approaches were tried such as the organization of educational conferences and the publication of journals and gazettes by the ministries[2] that set out the principles, systems and the most advanced teaching methods and experiences of European countries and the United States, including historical notes and book reviews as well. To these were soon added didactic sections with model lessons, teaching sequences, sheets and instructional materials for teachers, all of which became very popular.

As with inspection, it was also in the late 1960s that radical changes were made to the existing forms of teacher development with the introduction of short training courses and distance learning. The statutes that regulated the professional hierarchy and working conditions of teachers, made teacher development a duty and a right, which coupled with years of experience, would become a prerequisite for career advancement. Thus began the slow process of the institutionalization of continuous teacher professional development in Latin America, culminating in the 1980s and 1990s. Various organizations were involved in professional development courses, including unions or professional associations, teacher training institutions, universities, publishers of school textbooks and educational government agencies that set up their own centers for continuous training. During the 1970s, self-managed groups of teachers and schools organized their own networks and action–research training workshops.

This institutionalization phase ended between 1980 and 1990. It had been characterized by mass training, the establishment of specialized units in the ministries of Education and expansion of coverage in a context of educational and curriculum reforms. While the instrumental and homogeneous nature of this training did contribute to disseminate and implement reform policies, it also led to a centralization of the professional development agenda and a resulting inability to meet the local needs of schools and to provide teacher development aligned with their educational background and contexts (Vezub 2010).

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[2] One of the most important in the region was "*El Monitor de la Educación Común*" produced by the National Council of Education of Argentina that began in 1881 and was edited until 1950 without interruption, then revived in different historical periods. Another was the magazine "*Educación Común*" from the Directorate General of Schools of the Province of Buenos Aires and published 1877–1879, later replaced by "*Educación*" in the periods 1881–1895 and 1904–1938.

Box 39.1 Institutionalization of teacher professional development activities

CHILE – In 1967, the Ministry of Education of Chile created the *Center for Pedagogic Improvement, Experimentation, and Research* ("*Centro de Perfeccionamiento, Experimentación e Investigaciones Pedagógicas*" – CPEIP), responsible for policies and training programs, which took on an important role in teacher continuing education. New regulation in 1997 made the center responsible for maintaining a National Public Registry of teacher development opportunities as well as the accreditation of public and private institution offering professional development courses. The CPEIP evaluates and monitors approved training courses in the accredited institutions.

ARGENTINA – In 1987, Argentina established the *National Institute for Teacher Improvement and Training ("Instituto Nacional de Perfeccionamiento y Actualización Docente*" – INPAD). The Institute, through the provinces, offered in-service courses for secondary level teachers both face-to-face and by distance learning. Five years later, this body was abolished as part of the decentralization and devolution of educational services to provinces. A new Education Act (1994) established the "Federal Network of Continuous Teacher Training" (RFFDC), which commenced operations in 1996. The RFFDC consists of a national center and provincial branches charged with registering training institutions, evaluating training projects and administering the funds for their implementation.

MEXICO – In 1994, Mexico established the *National Program for the In-Service Training of Primary Education Teachers* ("*Programa Nacional para la Actualización Permanente de los Maestros de Educación Básica en Servicio*" – PRONAP). Its purpose was to provide quality in-service education, both continuous and relevant, through appropriate links between national and federal state initiatives. Later, in 1999, the Office of Continuing Education for In-Service Teachers was established and made responsible for the professional development of all Mexican teachers.

URUGUAY – In 1996, Uruguay founded the *Institute of Further and Higher Education Juan Pivel Devoto* (*Instituto de Perfeccionamiento y Estudios Superiores Juan Pivel Devoto*) responsible for organizing and delivering teacher training courses, postgraduate courses, conferences and various activities for the professional development of teachers.

This model was severely criticized by the new trends in the field of public policies and practices related to teacher professional development, as discussed below. These new changes fostered the provision of diverse forms of professional development. They were to have a focus on the school and on the specific problems faced by teachers. New forms of professional development would be based on the analysis of teaching practices, the recognition of the professional autonomy of

teachers as well as their role as active, protagonists in their own development (Vezub 2010; Ávalos 2007a).

From Inspection as Control Plus Advice, to the Separation of These Functions

The role of supervision and inspection can be understood as all the services and external mechanisms geared both to the control as well as professional assistance of schools and teachers with the purpose of institutional improvement and student learning. Carron and De Grauwe (2003), p. 8) describe them as "all those services whose main function is to monitor and evaluate, or advise and support managers and teachers."

Analyzing these supervisory changes, De Grauwe (2009) proposes four possible models: (1) the classic supervision model, (2) the central control model, (3) the close-to-school support model and (4) the school site supervision model. These four models examine the different types of responsibilities assumed by the central authorities and schools, as well as define supervision in terms of two areas: assistance and control.

(a) *The classical supervision model.* Supervision retains the role it was first assigned to control and provide support in pedagogic and administrative areas. Coverage is supposed to be global as each school or teacher has the right and is subjected to supervision. …In its pure form, this model places a strong emphasis on the external supervision service that is the most important monitoring tool. The internal evaluation of the school is weak and examination results are used to inform supervisors, but play no further role in school inspections. This reflects a strong trust in the capacity of State to control schools effectively.

(b) *The central control model.* This model is based on the following tenets: (1) Supervision should concentrate on one main task: to control. (2) The heavy bureaucracy that characterizes the classical model is not only expensive but also prevents it from functioning effectively. (3) External supervision cannot, on its own, lead to school improvement. The role of supervision is to inspect each school from time to time and to publish a public report… in the form of an "audit"… Intermediate information is needed to monitor the schools' performances. …Internal evaluation also develops an internal review process, which is an integral part of the external supervision cycle.

(c) *The close-to-school support model.* In this model the core role of supervision is to assist the weakest schools by offering them advice and guidance on how to improve. Each school will need to be treated differently and supervision will have to adapt itself to its needs. …Supervision visits, in this model, are an important monitoring tool …To ensure that they focus on the schools most in need of support, a database identifies a fair limited number of schools with which each supervisor has to work. … The aim is that they develop together projects and plans to improve teaching and school's operation.

(d) *The school-site supervision model*. Teachers and the local community are taken to be the best monitors of the quality and functioning of the school. The conviction exists that the teaching staff has the skills and professional conscience to participate in self- and peer evaluation without being supervised from outside, while the local community is willing and competent to exercise some control over the school. Because of the low level of disparities and cultural and social homogeneity, there is little need for strong central intervention, either to address those disparities or to ensure the respect of national norms, including the curriculum.

The historical evolution of the professionalization, specialization and diversification of the school inspection systems illustrates three fundamental tensions that remain in several systems, and often underlays the views that various agents (officials, inspectors, managers, teachers) have about their tasks, so conditioning their future development.

A first tension identified by Viñao (1999) is the tension between *politicization* and *professionalization* embedded in the view that the more politicized the less professional one is, and vice versa. This tension manifests itself for example in disputes over the mobility or immobility of the appointment of inspectors and their membership of the teaching ladder.[3] Originally conceived as state officials (*civil servants*), with all the characteristics implied – bureaucratic career, stability, full-time work – now, in the reform contexts inspectors take on a new figure, the *public servant*, with more liberal and flexible working conditions, often contracted for specific projects or as part-time work, etc. In some countries the function is outsourced through the recruitment of non-traditional actors (Núñez and Weinstein 2010).

The second tension affects *administrative* and *pedagogic issues* (Carron and De Grauwe 2003; Viñao 1999). The traditional format, whereby an inspector visited schools, classrooms and evaluated teachers, required that he or she possesses a good degree of pedagogic knowledge. The mass expansion of education, especially at the primary level, often without sufficient resources, reduced the inspector/supervisor's role to a desk job. As administrative tasks grew so did their preference for processing of files and the management of administrative claims.

The third and final tension is between the tasks of *controlling, inspecting or auditing* versus *advisory* roles. Or, in other words, a tension between inspectors viewed as agents of standardization, centralization and compliance with rules, and supervisors viewed as change promoters, advisors and drivers of school institutional autonomy.

In summary, inspection/supervision is an external control mechanism that watches over the quality of educational provisions. Although historically it has operated with different conceptions and centers of attention, essentially it remains concerned with two main tasks related to schools: advice and monitoring. A third function, formerly focused on the relationship between educational authorities and

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[3] Usually resolved in Teachers' statutes although these do not exist in all countries of the region.

schools, has now reached the schools in the form of mediation and arbitration. Madonar Pardinilla (2006, pp. 1–2) describes the process as follows:

> Control and assistance are two major pillars of the practices of educational supervision. Mediation and arbitration in turn are two tasks that emerge between these functions and their delicate balance (…) Mediation and arbitration, as new supervisory tasks, are closely related to the assistance function and to how it is carried out, as also to the control function.

So in actual practice the fundamental difference is not between controls versus advice. Both functions can be exercised from the perspectives of a *techno-bureaucratic model*, or a *critical-reflective approach* which involves the participation of principals and teachers and promotes autonomy, empowerment and professionalism: "The role of inspection as enhancing internal control balanced with external control can become a key to progress along these lines. It also requires a distinct and profound advisory function that considers each individual situation and helps to develop schools and teachers individually and as a whole" (Madonar Pardinilla 2006, p. 8).

The literature on the subject (del Castillo and Azuma 2009; Garcia and Zendejas 2008; Glickman et al. 2005; Zorrilla and Tapia 2002; Govinda and Shahjahan Tapan 1999) confirms that both functions – monitoring and advice – are essential for the proper functioning of educational institutions. The main purpose of control or audit is to ensure that the organization's activities achieve expected results. It also seeks to influence the behavior of institutional members and gear them toward collectively agreed goals (Pérez Figueiras 1999). To support the educational rights of all citizens to quality education and equity, supervisors must ensure that schools meet the laws, regulations and general educational guidelines. Supervisors have the double task of informing schools about the provisions adopted by the education authorities as well as informing their superiors about the situation, problems and needs of the schools (del Castillo and Azuma 2009).

An important part of the current role of supervisors is to help institutions to engage in constant development and to achieve improved results, in line with reform policies of government. This complex function is at the core of the implementation of change proposals, and requires building special capacity in schools as well as continuous professional development of teachers. As part of research conducted by Creemers (1998), the PhD thesis of He-chuan (2003) looks specifically at the relationship between the external context of institutions and their effectiveness.[4] The author identifies three principal contextual factors (external to schools) that can promote or hinder school improvement and effectiveness (Reezigt 2001, in He-chuan 2003): the clarity of education goals,[5] the pressure to improve (provided by external evaluation and accountability, participation in social and educational change and resources to improve) and institutional conditions such as degree of

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[4] Context is defined as "all levels of an educational system above the level of the organization of the school" (He-chuan Sun: 4). His definition is restricted to the education system, leaving aside the influence of parents, peers and socioeconomic status, while acknowledging their importance and recognizing that they can be considered a contextual dimension.

[5] Fullan agrees when he signals the need for a new 'moral purpose' (Fullan 1993).

autonomy, financial resources in the form of scholarships or grants, teacher and school working conditions and local support. In isolation, none of these factors have influence. They must be conceived of in terms of an "interactive multi-factor" situation. Consistent with other studies (Aguerrondo 2008) there seems to be three main strategies for achieving effective results in education institutions: national targets with system support that includes monitoring of implementation, external evaluation, feedback and reinforcement; a good balance between pressure and support, and an appropriate balance between autonomy and accountability.[6]

From this perspective, the supervisor/inspector would be one of the levers of change and educational innovation. Thus

> In the course of recent years many countries have redefined the role of external evaluators, reducing their controller and supervisory roles and developing its opposite in terms of counseling influence. This trend has been reinforced with increased school autonomy. The relationship between external evaluators and schools is increasingly regarded as a partnership based on dialogue and support. (Eurydice 2004, p. 116)

The supervisory function thus loses its hierarchical nature and places the supervisor/ inspector/adviser in a more horizontal relationship, as a consultant, collaborator and adviser to schools, while schools consistent with their degree of autonomy are made responsible for results. Accordingly, the supervisor does not "order," but advises or audits and evaluates on both pedagogic and administrative matters.

While the complementary function of audit, inspection or control by means of publicly agreed standards for school assessment and inspections visits has had an important impact in Northern countries (Eurydice 2004; OFSTED 2005; Ehren and Visscher 2008; Janssens and van Amelsvoort 2008; Luginbhul et al. 2009; OECD 2010), this is not the case in the Latin American region. Such procedures are however implied in ongoing processes in Chile and Ecuador.

Box 39.2 Four main supervision models

Supervision combines three roles: control, support and liaison between schools and with the Ministry. Each role has two dimensions: pedagogic and administrative. In principle, in addition to individual teachers, supervisors can also take an interest in schools as institutions and in the educational systems as a whole. Each supervisory system can be analyzed with regard to the relative emphasis it places on its different aspects and, particularly, on the choice between support and control. De Grauwe (2009, pp. 15–25) presents four models of educational supervision:

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[6] Goodson (2008) describes two patterns of curriculum change: educational change resulting from internal institutional actions and change generated, promoted and implemented externally to schools and teachers. Both are articulated in the support/coaching model understood as a process that promotes school autonomy, the professionalization of teachers and that strengthens their capacity for decision making, allowing for both dynamics of change (internal and external forces).

Box 39.3 Changes in patterns of advice recruitment

Following Latin American tradition, the supervisor is the highest position within the teaching profession, a role that is considered part of public administration and therefore, with stable life employment. A few exceptions to this rule are found in the region:

   Paraguay – The1274 Act, Article 110 (1998), states that: "The supervisor will be appointed by open competition, will remain in office for 6 years and may be reappointed." However, the rule has not operated as planned. In 2009, of 465 people working as supervisors (in administrative, technical and educational support), only 52 had been appointed by competition as required by law. The rest were "commissioned" (i.e. taken from the classroom to perform other tasks) but without being appointed as supervisors and therefore without job stability.

Source: *Departamento de Fortalecimiento de los Procesos Educacionales*, August 2009, Ministerio de Educación, Paraguay.

   Chile – In 2006, the Ministry of Education defined a set of 47 Secondary Schools as Priority Schools (with low levels of performance and vulnerable populations) to be provided with specialist support in order to improve their performance and results.. In 2007 and 2008 another 77 schools were added to the number of schools in this condition. Twenty-three universities and NGOs – with prestige and/or recognized expertise – were selected to provide support in leadership training for principals, curriculum management, social wellbeing and inclusion strategies, for a period of 3 years. Source: Ministerio de Educación de Chile (2005).

Box 39.4 Separation of administrative and educational functions – Paraguay

The Education Reform was launched in Paraguay in 1994 with the re-establishment of democracy. One of its aims was to make the Ministry of Education less bureaucratic. Within this framework, an important proposal was to change supervision tasks. In 1998 the "1264 General Education Law" (Chap. 1, Sect. 5) defined a new scheme dividing supervision into two branches: pedagogic supervision and administrative supervision. Thus a system of educational supervision and decentralization was implemented gradually from 2000 to 2003, … operating through the newly established Departmental Councils of Education.

   The system consists of: Pedagogic Support Supervisors, Control and Administrative Support Supervisors and Supervision Departmental Coordinators. The *Control and Administrative Support Supervision* function is charged with "planning, implementing and evaluating the functioning of education in the region, ensuring participation, quality, equity and relevance, speed and transparency in the enforcement of laws, rules, regulations and other provisions in the Ministry of Education and Culture".

Box 39.4 (continued)

The *Pedagogic Support Supervision* function is charged with "monitoring the implementation of the national curriculum …ensuring its relevance and consistency with the rest of the system (Ministry of Education and Culture, November 2006).

Initially teams of supervisors were located at departmental level, removing their specialization by school levels [primary & secondary] and giving more powers to the Departments in the context of decentralization. However, in 2005, the General Directorate of Educational Supervision was established to redirect the strategy. An evaluation concluded that that it was not appropriate for pedagogic supervisors to oversee all school levels generally. So in 2007 another reorganization took place that differentiated supervisory roles according to school levels, although maintaining the division between administrative and pedagogic supervision.

Currently (2010) this division of functions continues. The figure of Departmental Coordinator (a supervisor) has been added to coordinate all different level supervisors belonging to a Department.

Source: Personal interview with Raúl López Aguilera, Adviser to the Minister, 09.06.2010

Box 39.5 Separation of functions of control/monitoring and support/advice – Chile

With the return of democracy in 1990, the Chilean government initiated a process of educational change known as the Education Reform. One of the most important issues was to reach schools in order to improve their quality and learning outcomes. Educational supervision in Chile was thus organized in three levels: central, regional and provincial. Although "Supervisors are defined in Chile as professionals who at provincial level visit and offer technical–pedagogic support to schools…. the center of their activity at provincial level is to offer technical and pedagogic support to schools targeted as needing special attention" (Navarro and Pérez 2002, p. 30).

Both functions (supervision and inspection) are located in the Provincial Departments of Education of the Ministry of Education. While inspection refers to the control and monitoring of compliance with administrative norms, supervision is primarily concerned with technical–pedagogic support. However, this purpose is undermined in several ways. The daily practice of supervision appears confusing, inconsistent and scattered, since the approximately 1,000

Box 39.5 (continued)

supervisors deployed must respond to multiple requests. Instead of advising teachers in the classroom about problems of teaching, learning and school life… they are forced to use much of their time to "down-load" national educational policy guidelines. As a whole, supervision does not have sufficient capacity to provide coverage to all schools. The needed and justifiable focusing of assistance on low-performing schools during the initial stages of the Reform, have in fact left an untenable void as far as the rest of the schools is concerned" (Núñez and Weinstein 2010).

The importance of supporting the technical and pedagogic needs of schools has led to a specialization of those engaged in pedagogic assistance. "Resulting from a massive recruitment of 93 new supervisors undertaken in 2004, other professionals and practitioners in the social sciences have taken on supervisory roles. Thus, side-by-side the pedagogic supervisors with expertise in curriculum matters and teaching methods, there is another group of social science supervisors who assist schools in having a systemic view of their internal operation and their relationship with the community, as well as learning about other organizational aspects" (Source: Coordinación Nacional de Supervisión 2005, p. 7).

Systemic control is supported in Chile primarily through SIMCE (National System of Learning Assessment), dating from 1980, which assesses learning outcomes by means of biannual tests and a battery of complementary instruments that includes the school's self-assessment. The school's self-assessment is an important part of the supervisor's work. As well as helping schools to organize their self-evaluation, the supervisor records his or her observations in an instrument called the Supervisor's Guide which acts both as pedagogic support for the school as well as a source of data on its operation (Navarro and Pérez 2002, p. 37).

Box 39.6 The emerging role of inspection/audit – Ecuador

Ecuador is redefining the role of supervision in the context of profound structural changes exemplified by the new National Constitution (2008), a strong reorganization of the State (New Model of Management 2009) and its Ten-Year Education Plan 2006–2015. The country has important precedents that date back to 1975 (specific supervision for secondary schools), to the Law 127 of 1983 (specialized supervision for each education level) and to the 1994 Educational Supervision System.

The 1994 Educational System incorporates a series of unusual developments in the Region. Integrated Teams of Educational Supervision (EISEs)

Box 39.6 (continued)

bring together supervisors at all levels of a UTE (Educational Territorial Unit) who work on the basis of an Operating Plan and joint meetings. These teams are hierarchically linked to the Provincial Coordination Councils that lead, energize, supervise and evaluate their work. These agencies also depend on the Regional Coordinating Councils (EISER), on the Central Council (EISEC) and on the National Directorate of Educational Supervision (Ministerio de Educación y Cultura Ecuador 1994, p. 31).

Problems of implementation have highlighted a need for the reorganization of supervision. The planned proposal includes three main functions to be performed by staff belonging to the National Educational Supervision Model (MNSE): (1) Advice to educational institutions; (2) Audit of processes and results; and (3) Forecasting and conflict mediation. These functions are organized into the four levels of the new decentralized administration but not all in all levels, so as to avoid duplicity of functions. A summary outline of the organization is:

- Central level: only performs audit function (national coordination)
- Zonal or regional level: only performs advisory roles (regional coordination)
- District level: performs two functions, auditing, and prevention/conflict mediation at school level
- Circuit level: only performs advisory functions in educational institutions through pedagogic advisers and teacher mentors

The new model proposes to have general and specialized *educational advisers* to provide guidance and technical assistance for school projects and to assist them in the overall improvement of management. Supervisors will provide schools with information on institutions able to offer assistance such as universities, teacher education institutions, specialized NGOs, and so on. They will fulfill the dual role of bringing innovation to schools as well as disseminate effective innovations that schools themselves are developing. Carefully prepared mentors or experienced classroom teachers will provide assistance to their colleagues.

On the other hand, *audit wor*k will be based on the standards or criteria, developed by the Ministry of Education, which form the basis for school evaluations. The audit process will consist of two processes:

- Monitoring of the functioning and performance results of schools, through means of an integrated information system.
- Audit Reporting based on two inputs: the school's self-assessment and internal reports based on Ministry of Education standards, and a one- to two-day external evaluation conducted by teams of at least two people with complementary profiles.

The new legislation provides for Conflict Resolution Boards (not as a part of the supervision system) to conduct administrative inquiries. The educational supervisor will collaborate with them in the *prevention and mediation of conflicts* in schools. This function is an attempt to anticipate conflicts or mediate between the parties so as to reach agreements before resorting to central administrative bodies.

Source: Personal interview with the Assistant Secretary for Support and Monitoring of the Ministry of Education, Dr. Beatriz Caicedo 15/06/2010.

From Training Based on Courses to Collective Teacher Professional Development

Support to schools is a key factor for promoting teacher development, educational innovation and educational change. Assistance and advisory work is a counterpoint to control because it does not set out to detect the problems of schools per se, but to propose plans to overcome them and provide support to carry them out. As argued by Bolivar (2010), to strengthen bureaucratic control only leads to further disqualification, de-professionalization and job dissatisfaction of teachers. Advisers, on the contrary, help teachers to move from decision-making based on strongly held beliefs and routines to teaching that is based on informed and meaningful decisions (Martínez Olivé 2008). It also prepares for curriculum innovation and dynamic teaching through means of individual and collaborative reflection in schools (Domingo Segovia 2005).

Research and evaluation of policy and teacher education programs have shown the effectiveness of classroom-based support or coaching strategies for the improvement of teaching practices (Navarro and Verdisco 2000; Ingvarson et al. 2005; Avalos 2007b; Vezub 2010). Imbernón (2007, p. 148) notes that "advice must be supported by teacher reflection on their practice, the examination of their implicit theories, their operating schemata, their attitudes, etc., and by a constant process of self-assessment to guide personal, professional and institutional development." Teachers require external support structures and devices to change their practices and to act as mediators and facilitators of change (Domingo Segovia 2005). These activities should strengthen their ability to solve problems and meet the challenges involved in improving teaching practice.

Mentoring in professional development implies the furthering of cultural change among teachers and institutions in order for them to reexamine the values, beliefs, shared and deep-rooted memories that facilitate or impede the implementation of educational innovations. In this case, the mentor's role is not so much to provide answers to specific school, teaching or student learning problems, but to help teachers internalize a way of working that makes them increasingly more autonomous, less

dependent on external assistance, more collaborative and reflective, so allowing them to resolve their difficulties on their own.

The progressive incorporation of a mentor figure in education systems appears as a policy alternative to the weak effects of traditional in-service training based on courses and technical rationality (Imbernon 2007). Technical rationality in fact has supported an instrumental notion of training, the homogenization and standardization of training methods and a deficit view of teachers' capacity. Mentoring relies on different theoretical models and concepts, some of which maintain the traditional dichotomy of experts versus teachers, conceptual–theoretical knowledge versus technical/applied knowledge, while others try to overcome these dichotomies. There are three possible types of mentoring (Schein in Imbernon 2007, p. 149):

- *Acquisition of services' model*, in which an institution entrusts an external counselor/consultant to provide a service or support, which usually includes the formulation of proposals and solutions to problems.
- The *doctor–patient model*, in which an external consultant reviews, identifies and diagnoses problems of the school and offers a series of recommendations to overcome them.
- In the *process model*, a series of collaborative activities, where the adviser's role is to help teachers in a particular context to perceive, understand and formulate their problems and proposals for improvement

Each of these approaches gives shape to different school cultures and expands or restricts the level of competence and professional autonomy of teachers. Unlike the first two approaches where the external promotion of change predominates, the third approach contains the idea of change from within, trusting teachers' capacity for self-development, autonomy and reflection.

The field of teacher education has presented its own critique of the homogenizing and almost universal model of change adopted by the Latin America's education systems, and of teachers as efficient executors of top-down education reforms. Several authors have thus supported the idea of "teacher education built from within the profession" (Nóvoa 2009; Unda Bernal 2003) and of teachers as producers of educational knowledge (Terigi 2007; Tardif 2004). Teachers are able to systematize their teaching practices by recording and analyzing their experiences critically, the conditions under which they occur, and how to build school and teacher identity. So understood, continuing professional development is not only a key career dimension but part of a process of reconstruction of professional identity.

The new professional development trends promote collective and collaborative learning (Ávalos 2007a; Montecinos 2003) by means of teacher networks, and *communities of practice* (Wenger 2001; Imbernón 2009; Vera 2008; Hargreaves 2003; Lieberman and Wood 2003). These are professional groups based on socio-cognitive interactions that share their interests and knowledge about a given problem. By supporting horizontal forms of professional development teacher networks generate other maps of knowledge and alter traditional relationships between knowledge and power. Communities of practice provide an opportunity for teachers to make their teaching more effective, to analyze the socio-cultural contexts of contemporary schooling

and to seek answers to classroom problems. The central features of networks or communities of learning and professional development are:

- Collective cooperation
- Focus on practice and teachers' actions
- Student learning
- Horizontal teacher participation
- Valuing of experiential knowledge, built on practice
- Professional responsibility (a commitment to equity and quality education for all)
- Emphasis on reflective and meta-cognitive processes (fundamental basis for learning and continuous professional development).

School-based professional development as well as networks and learning communities are strongly supported by teachers because they make them feel valued and recognized in their knowledge and professionalism. Their powerful effects on learning and teacher training are well documented (Day 2005), but to succeed the school needs to meet a number of conditions (Vezub 2010). First, school-based professional development is a medium and long-term bet. This means that it requires policies that are sustained over time and not subject to political changes that may occur at the central levels of education. Secondly, the assumption that teachers have the autonomy and confidence to manage their professional development must be based on evidence that they are well prepared and have some experience in project design and self-management. Thirdly, they require human resources (mentors/advisers) and financial support, if they are to be implemented at a large scale. Otherwise, they tend to be reduced to a limited number of schools.

The concept of *distributed leadership* (López Yánez and Lavié Martínez 2010) enables us to rethink its relationship with innovation. In contrast to classical conceptions that view leadership as an individual phenomenon, associated with personality traits and the possession of formal responsibilities in an organization, distributed leadership expands the concept flexibly to leading through team work, and not through holding a senior position. This type of collective leadership can often be found in schools, and coexists with formal, focused and individual forms of leadership. Teachers as informal leaders conduct many curriculum improvement and teaching activities and principals tend to support them by providing alternative staff to assist in their work. The authors note that given the variety of support staff that service schools in developed countries it is possible to speak in those contexts of "*system leadership*," a description coined by Higham et al. (2009).

One might ask how does this leadership interact with formal leadership (the principal's and sometimes the heads of departments or areas) in the same school? Also, how does system leadership link with the school's informal leaders? Or perhaps the question should be what is the capacity of an external consultant to support or to generate this kind of leadership, so that it is able to sustain medium and long-term innovations and policies? Reflection and collective work in the school are consistent with distributed leadership; they are mechanisms that can help build or strengthen (autonomous and distributed) organizational patterns and school management.

As the example below shows, several Latin American countries have begun to implement and strengthen mechanisms for pedagogic support to schools. These initiatives are targeted at institutions with poor national assessment results and generally serve the most vulnerable populations, with high poverty rates.

The new perspectives on professional development described above are components of strategies to encourage school change and improve student learning. In this framework, several experiments are being developed in the Region to allow teachers to recover their voice, build professional knowledge from within the profession and reflect on their task. This leads to a re-examination of the traditional power–knowledge relations between schoolteachers, technocrats and educational experts.

Box 39.7 Colombia: National Pedagogic Expedition

The National Educational Expedition began in Colombia in 1998 coordinated by the National Pedagogic University in agreement with the Ministry of Education. It continues to be a political, educational and cultural movement, in which the so-called expeditionary teachers travel around the country to learn about other schools, share knowledge, collect teaching practices, research and train. In addition to travel, the project holds permanent seminars, international congresses that bring together national networks of teachers, the compilation and publication in 2006 of the Atlas of Colombian Education that contains the routes taken by the expeditionary teachers and the specific locations where they found successful teaching practices. Source: Vezub (2005).

Box 39.8 Argentina: CAIE Network Project

The *CAIE Network Project* in Argentina is currently implemented by the National Teacher Education Institute of the Ministry of Education and consists of 240 centers located in an equal number of provincial Colleges of Teacher Education. Between 2007 and 2008 one of its main lines of work was "the narrative documentation of educational experiences" of teachers in the different levels of education. The Network has organized a large number of professional development seminars, sponsored exchanges of practical experiences and written documentation, many of which have been published under the authorship of the teachers.

Currently the CAIE Network helps to strengthen initial teacher education and professional development, as well as of schools through educational research and pedagogic support. From 2010 the program has identified five areas of work: (1) pedagogic writing related to educational experiences, (2) new pedagogic literacy and imagery, (3) cultural development in teacher

(continued)

Box 39.8 (continued)

education institutions, schools and local social organizations, (4) contributions to teacher policy, research activities, pedagogic support to schools, school improvement projects and student policy, (5) production of materials.

To this end CAIE works in three ways: (1) as centers of renovation, innovation and pedagogic experimentation as well as educational project design, (2) as resource centers, equipped with libraries and multimedia, that provide advice to teachers and schools, and (3) as centers for the articulation of national and provincial teacher education policies, by surveying the demands and needs within their region.

Source: Network Center Project Update and Educational Innovation (CAIE), Ministerio de Educación (2010) National Teacher Training Institute, Ministry of Education of Argentina.

Box 39.9 Chile. Teachers of Teachers Network

The *Teachers of Teachers Network* (RMM) in Chile was created in 2002 with the purpose of enhancing the educational system's human resources, by putting them at the service of teacher professional development. The network members are teachers with extensive and successful professional careers who have voluntarily submitted to a high-stakes evaluation of their knowledge and teaching capabilities. Once selected, they undergo professional development to successfully carry out their role as teachers of other teachers. This means learning to work with their peers in environments that promote learning, develop pedagogic leadership skills, understand educational processes comprehensively and their links to social development, and use reflection as a means of improving teaching practices.

Every RMM teacher has a page on the network's website to disseminate their work, provide teaching resources, advise colleagues, discuss educational issues and respond to questions that commonly arise in schools. Teachers in the network also have diverse opportunities and material incentives for professional development. For example, they have a prior claim to be prepared in university courses as mentors for beginning teachers. They can also apply for project funding to implement a plan of educational counseling and thus support other classroom teachers. These projects receive funding from the Ministry and provide stipends to compensate for work carried outside their contract hours.

Source: http://ww.rmm.cl/website/

Box 39.10 Caribbean, Central America and the Andean region of South America Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training

The *Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training* (CETT) discussed in greater detail elsewhere (Miller 2006; Vezub 2010) became operational in 2003 and constitute an international experience funded by USAID and implemented in different countries in three regions: the Caribbean, Central America and the Andean region of South America. CETT provide training and professional support to teachers working in the first 3 years of the primary school to renew and enhance their literacy teaching skills which are a key factor in the school success, thus preventing dropouts. In each region consortia involving both authorities and experts from ministries, and civic associations, universities and teacher education institutions develop instructional materials, engage in training and provide educational support to teachers to implement new ways of teaching.

CETT are primarily intended for schools that serve rural and lower socioeconomic populations. The training is flexible and diverse. It regards teachers as builders of pedagogic knowledge, which acts to transform the classroom as well as being self-transforming. Its aim is to innovate in teaching practices and literacy, create collaborative work between teachers and promote learning through children's active participation. The CETTs alternate periods of theoretical and methodological training (through courses and workshops) with periods of reflection on practice, independent study, testing new strategies in the classroom, and periods of monitoring and consultant feedback to teaching. The program has a portal and platform that acts as a communication channel, supports the development of teacher education activities, promotes exchanges and makes available the resources developed.

Sources: Miller (2006); Vezub (2010) and website: http://www.lectoescritura-cett.org/redcett.htm

Conclusion

In all the countries of the Latin American region, educational modernization and reform processes derive from a concern about poor learning results and educational quality. In recent decades professional development policies have been launched to tackle these issues, and more recently also, the modernization of processes and roles of school supervision.

The cases described above allow us to surmise that the region is involved in systemic approaches to change. Its reform goals are not only to change supervision or to improve teacher professional development, but also to improve the provision of educational services. This, in turn, implies a political strategy that includes

comprehensive reform. Moreover, as many of the cases in this chapter illustrate, the experiences described are framed within the context of broader and deeper substantive political changes (affecting all areas of social life). In Paraguay changes were the result of the end of a very long dictatorship. In Ecuador, the change framework is part of a new Constitution (2008), a comprehensive State reform and the Ten-Year Education Plan 2006–2015. In Chile, reforms began also with the recovery of democracy in 1990, while in Mexico – not referred to in the chapter – changes in supervision occurred when the Agreement on Educational Decentralization was signed in 1992.[7]

Despite all this, it would seem that the stimulus for urgent change in school supervision continues to be missing in Latin America. Even where such awareness exists, its relevance and level of sustainability is weak because it is made up of fragments or scattered attempts. Some social actors recognize these issues, but often their criticism is superficial and centered on factors such as the inadequacy of the initial and continuing preparation of supervisors or teachers; the substantive and technical limitations in the knowledge base of supervisors; the absence of training and academic support systems for management staff and principals. A number of criticisms also refer to lack of sufficient resources: too many schools per supervisor, their inadequate and inequitable distribution among provinces or the near retirement of many of the current supervisors and the need to renew the inspection bodies.

Similarly, in most Latin American countries the conditions of practice as well as the level of teacher professionalization and teacher education – despite recent efforts and differences among countries – are far from what is hoped and do not ensure the standards achieved in most developed countries (Vaillant 2004). There have been serious criticisms about the models and training policies implemented since the 1980s and 1990s and some countries have begun to experiment with changes to the models and the agenda of professional development. As yet, these policies are not completely articulated and consolidated as alternative practices. As the cases show, their goal is to promote various initiatives, rooted in the local level, in specific situations experienced by teachers and real teaching problems, as well as in the daily practices that could change part of the school's pedagogic and organizational culture. The conviction that teachers should be actors and active participants in the educational process is little by little changing preparation programs into strategies that allow for the reconstruction of practical knowledge, systematization, documentation and exchange of teaching experiences. The school – no longer individual teachers – is becoming the favored theater for continuing education programs.

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[7] In Mexico the state of Aguascalientes began a process of regionalization of supervision and teamwork in 1993–1998 focusing on regional supervisors at all levels and deepening their technical–pedagogical responsibility (Zorrilla Fierro and Tapia García 2002). The process has continued to the present day and is one of the exemplary cases of good practices in the country. The states of Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Nueva León, Quintana Roo and the Federal District have also changed supervision processes (Calvo et al. 2002).

It therefore seems sensible to move toward a strategy that overcomes the tensions or dichotomies between the supervisor's two traditional areas of work – administrative and academic – and between the two assigned functions (control and advice). Both control and advice must be practiced in both institutional dimensions: control/improvement of management and administrative processes as well as monitoring/improvement of teaching–learning processes.

It also seems necessary to reduce the traditional isolation of teachers' work, which confines them to the classroom, with little opportunity to share their work with colleagues and often without support or control. Both features are key to the professionalization of teachers' work, their capacity to reflect and assess achievements based on common goals, shared educational parameters, and criteria agreed by the professional community, school governing bodies and society in general. In this way there is a greater likelihood that we will come closer to an educational system that teaches with quality and equity within a democratic framework.

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Part VII
Spreading the Task: Including Others in Leadership for Learning

Chapter 40
Leadership for Learning: What It Means for Teachers

Susan Lovett and Dorothy Andrews

Introduction

Theories about teacher leadership and how it is manifested in practice have become prominent in recent times. Harris et al. (2007) reference to a 'leadership industry' suggests that the discipline has become very susceptible to new theories or labels (p. 338). Recent theories (Spillane and Diamond 2007), which loosely fit under the 'leadership for learning' umbrella, have emerged in response to the changing policy and professional context of schooling and to increasing concerns about student achievement. This emergence foregrounds the role that teachers can play in making a difference to student achievement.

Recent educational leadership titles also indicate this change of emphasis by recognising that it is those closest to classrooms who can best inspire the youth of today to reach their potential. Hess (2008) suggests the way forward is to 'follow the teacher'. Katzenmeyer and Moller (1996) similarly argue that it is teachers who represent the largest group of prospective leaders because they are the ones who can best serve as the real change agents for school improvement. The two authors liken this untapped resource to a 'sleeping giant', waiting to be woken. They argue strongly that the future of schools is 'dependent on the productive engagement of teachers as leaders' (p. ix). They also suggest that 'this sleeping giant can be awakened by helping teachers believe they are leaders, by offering opportunities to develop their leadership skills and by providing school cultures that honour their leadership' (p. 2).

Our purpose in this chapter is to explore some of the meanings attributed to leadership for learning and what these understandings mean for teachers assuming

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leadership roles. We use several case studies along with relevant literature to illustrate how teacher leadership is enacted in school settings in order to enhance student achievement. These case studies from Australia and New Zealand feature teacher leaders working in a variety of ways with other teachers. They include teacher leaders working with individual teachers, with small groups and with whole schools. We argue that, despite variations in how teacher leaders interpret, and are able to enact, their leadership, some generic principles relative to their work apply. In addressing this matter, we consider two leadership for learning frameworks – one fashioned by Crowther et al. (2002) and the other by MacBeath and Dempster (2009). The two frameworks include a focus on learning within an environment that encourages creativity and risk-taking by offering opportunities for shared dialogue on agreed matters. According to these frameworks, such an environment relies on school staff sharing leadership and accountability for student learning and achievement in classrooms.

Difficulties with Definition

Reconciling what we understand on the one hand, by leadership as a formal role within the teaching profession, and on the other, with a conception of leadership as influencing others and working with them is not easy. Any exploration of what teacher leadership and leadership for learning actually encompass within a school tends to challenge our existing conceptions of what we understand teachers and leaders do (Murphy 2005).

Murphy concurs with Crowther et al. (2002) when he claims that a 'massive amount of work is required to explore the meaning of teacher leadership' and to reach clarity of definition (p. 4). At one end of the continuum is the view that all teachers can be leaders (Barth 1999; Hess 2008). At the other end is the view that teacher leaders are the select few who see themselves as the 'superstars' of the profession, serving as instructional coaches or professional developers – roles that allow teacher leaders to talk about teaching rather than necessarily continue classroom teaching. Moreover, new and particular notions and forms of leadership are emerging as schools transform themselves to meet the needs of their students in the twenty-first century. Crowther et al. (2009), for example, suggest that it is difficult to imagine the evolution of a knowledge society without the teaching profession leading the way (p. xv). Yet the idea that all teachers are potential leaders remains contested.

It is a paradox that traditional notions of leadership assume that leadership occurs beyond the classroom rather than being closely connected to it. In endeavouring to provide some resolution to this matter, Hess (2008) suggests that teacher leadership begins in the classroom: '…the teacher is the captain in her classroom and it is precisely her effectiveness as a leader that will determine whether that class sails, sinks, or drifts somewhere in between' (p. 9). He explains that notions of teacher career are such that, typically, the best teachers move into administrative

roles, which take them away from working directly with children. Murphy (2005) also describes the principles of teacher leadership as being grounded in classrooms, with effective teaching as a prelude to teacher leadership, thereby linking teaching, learning and leadership. Teacher leadership is thus collaborative work that is community anchored, involves a service function and is co-constructed and context-bound. Above all, teacher leadership is about making a difference to student achievement (pp. 68–69).

Towards Leadership for Learning

In this section, we tease out from the literature the 'ingredients' that need to be at hand in order to facilitate leadership for learning. How these ingredients come together to produce various forms of teacher leadership is apparent in the case study accounts of Australian and New Zealand teachers that follow.

Shared Leadership, Distributed Leadership

Hargreaves (2002) maintains that, in today's society, school leaders need to know more about, and to take a more active involvement in, students' learning than ever before. They therefore need to remain abreast of the rapidly changing conceptions of what students need to learn and how that learning should be conducted (p. ix). However, the demands of school leaders' work in today's society are such that they cannot do this and the rest of their work on their own. School leaders accordingly need to work closely with teachers to build relationships of a kind that enables teachers and their students to engage in ongoing and productive learning within rapidly changing political and social contexts.

Mitchell and Sackney (2000) and Sergiovanni (2001) concur. Leadership for learning, they say, requires a broader base of participants than has been the case previously if it is to have the necessary impact on student learning (Robinson et al. 2009). According to Gronn (2000) and Reeves (2008), in a schooling context leadership needs to be reframed in terms of the work teachers do alongside one another. The practice of what has come to be known as distributed leadership rests on the understanding that leadership tasks consume more energy than a sole leader can possibly provide in a school. Creating opportunities for others to engage in leadership activities helps address not only issues of leadership succession but also efforts to sustain school improvement (Harris et al. 2007).

Murphy (2005), however, claims that traditional notions of leadership, particularly the acceptance of formal roles, limit opportunity for teachers to see themselves as leaders beyond their own classrooms. Murphy regards this situation as problematic because power tends to inhibit learning with teacher colleagues. Hargreaves (2002) agrees. He contends that 'the potential for lasting leadership has

been subverted by locking up leadership in the roles and behaviours of a few individuals' (p. xi). Teaching, he continues, should be the core profession in today's knowledge society because teachers are the key agents of change: '… teachers are the midwives of that knowledge society - without them, without their competence, our future will be malformed and stillborn' (p. x). Wrigley (2003), in presenting a similar argument, refers to the resurgence of interest in teachers as leaders as the new agenda for school improvement.

Hargreaves (2002) stresses that teachers who are supported by high-quality principalship can, given the chance, lead (p. ix). He refers to this relationship between leaders and teachers as parallel leadership (p. xii), involving collaborative learning of the kind evident within professional learning communities (Hord 1997).

A Conducive Culture

Leadership must connect with learning for teachers and students. Barth (2001), Stoll et al. (2003), and Wrigley (2003) are among the leadership writers who position schools as 'houses of learning', where, if the conditions are conducive, teachers can engage in dialogue with one another so as to enhance their teaching practices. However, because, as these authors explain, schools remain entrenched in models of professional development that tend to have others determining learning agendas, teachers need to take more ownership of these in order to invigorate their teaching practice and thereby increase their responsiveness to student learning needs. Reeves (2008) urges schools to question whether their current forms of professional learning are actually working for school improvement. Lieberman and Miller (2004, p. 9) observe that the organisational structures of schools, which are underpinned by prevailing norms of isolation and privacy, make it difficult for teachers to have the time and space to talk and learn from one another during the school day.

Reeves (2008) promotes the potential of direct observation of classroom teaching. She suggests that classrooms can become learning grounds for teachers as well as students. Shared experiences of and about their own practice in classrooms allow teachers to gain new or enhanced understandings and to consider alternatives, especially once they learn to trust and value their interactions with their colleagues. Ways need to be found to foster these collegial interactions because it is through such collaborations that teachers can pool their expertise and learn from one another.

Mitchell and Sackney (2007) highlight notions of inclusiveness, wholeness and connection in their work on professional learning communities (p. 31). They suggest five principles of engagement that underpin the success of such communities. These are deep respect, collective responsibility, appreciation of diversity, a problem-solving orientation, and positive role modelling (pp. 32–34).

Martin-Kniep (2008) critiques the prevailing isolation of colleagues in schools and calls for structural changes to traditional staff hierarchies and school rooms and offices so that schools can become true professional learning communities. He considers that effective professional learning communities are those that have

three main elements. The first is a learning focus, where participants receive the support and resources they need to develop their individual understandings, skills, strategies, and processes (p. 21). These learnings are shared and connected to schools' needs to support students' learning. The second element is leadership in terms of developing the leadership capacity of the participants. Here, the members use what they have learned to influence the work of other adults. The third element is 'communities that last', emphasising the need for participants to be proactive in regard to change processes so as to ensure appropriate and ongoing development of processes, structures and practices (p. 24). Each of these elements requires equal attention to maximise the talent from within and to extend the potential of the learning community even further.

Others expand this 'connections' theme by moving into the realm of networked learning communities (Jackson and Temperley 2007; Stoll 2009), including international networks (Stoll et al. 2007). Jackson and Temperley argue that networking for professional learning in a knowledge-rich world is more than making a case for 'beyond school collaboration and enquiry as *opposed to* internal professional learning … [or] networked professional learning community *instead of* professional learning community' (p. 45). What else is needed is a new form of belonging and engagement among teachers within and beyond the boundaries of their respective schools. Teachers need to learn from one another, learn with one another, and learn on behalf of one another. As they do so, they become more and more conscious of the processes informing their own learning about teaching and student learning. Jackson and Temperley suggest that three fields of knowledge – practitioner knowledge, public knowledge and new knowledge – underpin this learning, which they call meta-learning. The authors use metaphors of threads, knots and nets to illustrate how teachers can work together to create the knowledge and skills they need to improve students' learning and achievement.

Stoll et al. (2007) claim that international networks are valuable sources of learning because such 'networking … enables them [teachers and leaders] to share and tease out principles of good practice, engage in in-depth dialogue across schools, create knowledge to respond to particular challenges that any one school might find hard to resolve, observe colleagues elsewhere, experience fresh perspectives, reduce isolation, and see their own school through a different lens' (p. 63). Robertson and Webber (2002), and subsequently MacBeath et al. (2006), demonstrated the value of extending country boundaries when researching leadership for learning programmes across countries. They found that these exchanges not only supported leaders and teachers in their work but also challenged them to explore different ways of thinking and acting in relation to their roles, including how they could work together to share leadership.

Disciplined Dialogue

The important part played by what Swaffield and Dempster (2009) call disciplined dialogue in respect of effective learning communities and networks cannot be

underestimated. This form of talk, which the authors define as 'informed, inclusive and enabling' (p. 118), helps teachers talk with one another about ideas and concerns in a 'constructive' (p. 106) way that allows them to develop trusting relationships with one another and to view their colleagues as learning resources. In their accounts of the Australian school revitalisation programme 'Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievement in Schools' (IDEAS), Andrews and Lewis (2007) describe how school-wide processes can be used to help teachers not only bring a shared approach to their pedagogy but also engage in future thinking about their roles and their work. They found that as the teachers engaged in collective dialogue with one another, they developed understandings that could not easily be created by individuals (p. 133). In short, the teachers were harnessing the power of the collective rather than being left to reflect on their own. Swaffield and Dempster (2009) caution that disciplined dialogue needs to be encouraged by systemic change that gives teachers opportunities to work through conversations about practice with one another.

The concept of the professional learning community encompasses this intent, as is evident in the account by MacBeath et al. (2006) of their Carpe Vitam Project, which they describe as 'a sequence of … conversations about learning and conversations as learning' (p. 13). It was 'through those multi-level conversations', the authors continue, that 'the meaning of leadership [was] grasped both intellectually and in action' (p. 13). The conversations took the teachers and leaders through the phases of storming, norming, performing and reforming, during which the participants made connections, extended their thinking and were challenged to think in new ways. These ways, MacBeath and colleagues point out, required participants 'not simply to incorporate new ideas into one's familiar comfort zone but to challenge some of the very premises on which thinking and practice rest … this tripartite routine has proved its applicability and transferability at classroom as well as at school or inter-school level' (p. 14).

We have argued that three ingredients matter when linking leadership with learning in schools (shared and distributed leadership, conducive cultures and disciplined dialogue). We now provide four case studies across two countries to illustrate the ways in which teacher leadership is enacted in school settings. The schools and teachers are anonymised.

Case Studies

A Defined Teacher Leadership Role: The Specialist Classroom Teacher (New Zealand)

This case study highlights a New Zealand initiative designed to retain teacher leaders in classroom settings so that their leadership actions influence other teachers in ways most likely to enhance student learning and achievement. The case study is of

an early career secondary teacher named Ruby, appointed to a position called a specialist classroom teacher (SCT). The SCT role offers teachers a career pathway that keeps them connected to classroom teaching but simultaneously enables them to work with colleagues to enhance their teaching practices.

The role, which has some similarities to the advanced skills teacher role in other countries, appeared in New Zealand secondary schools after the 2004 settlement of the Secondary Teachers' Collective Agreement. It began as a pilot programme in 2006, was favourably reviewed in 2007 by Ward, and has continued with some modifications since. The components of the role are designed to promote more effective teaching practice and to enhance student engagement in learning (Ministry of Education 2009).

Under the ministry provision, each school in New Zealand is given a monetary allowance so that it can appoint one teacher to the SCT position. Provision is also made for four or more hours (depending on school size) of additional staffing time so that the SCTs have time for this work. They also have, via ministry funding, access to appropriate professional development, such as postgraduate courses.

The work of the SCT is strongly focused on learning – on finding ways for teachers to have conversations about student learning and achievement in classrooms. The principles of trust and confidentiality underpin this work: teachers need to know that the concerns they share about their practice will not be used against them by the school's senior management team.

Supportive colleagues, such as the SCT, can make the difference as to whether teachers stay in the profession or opt out, as Donaldson (2005) and Elvidge (2002) found from their respective studies into teacher retention. The quality of beginning teacher mentoring and induction and the support given to teachers once they have gained their registration is another important factor in relation to teacher retention (Cameron 2009).

Ruby's story, which follows, shows how one school retained a promising teacher by encouraging her to take on the SCT role.

Ruby's Story

Ruby, a secondary English teacher in her late 20s, 'stumbled into' teaching. After gaining her teaching qualification, she taught for 6 months in a relief position before heading overseas. In England, she accepted a position at a school on the outskirts of London. The school was under 'special measures' and therefore at risk of closure. The position was a tough one, especially for a beginning teacher. Ruby was not treated as a beginning teacher and learned to survive through her own efforts. Six months into her time at the school she was asked to assume a leadership role as assistant head of English. Ruby somewhat reluctantly accepted this role and, despite its challenges, survived. The success she experienced teaching disengaged learners identified her as not only a competent teacher but as someone who could work comfortably alongside other teachers.

Back in New Zealand, Ruby became one of the 57 early career teachers participating in a nationwide New Zealand study called the Teachers of Promise study (TOPS) (Cameron et al. 2006). This longitudinal study tracked, over several years, the career paths of these teachers from their third year of teaching. Ruby's career is of particular interest because she changed countries and schools, moved into leadership and management roles, yet still maintained her classroom teaching role.

Ruby's first teaching position on returning to New Zealand was filling in for a teacher on maternity leave. She then took up a full-time position at a co-educational urban secondary school, where once again she encountered disengaged students. Her first challenge was to establish routines to settle a class which had already had four other teachers in the first 3 months of the year. After several months, Ruby added a leadership role to her classroom work that of assistant head of department (HOD).

Reflecting some time later on what she found satisfying (or not satisfying) about this dual role, Ruby said, 'I don't like the paperwork … I don't like a lot of the responsibility … but I do enjoy the teaching, getting them motivated and making a difference'. She said she appreciated the opportunity of a leadership role, but could only cope with her classroom teaching if she took her planning and marking home. The job, she explained, had begun to consume her life because she was determined to do the very best for her students. Juggling the two roles frustrated her, and was preventing her from being the kind of teacher she wanted to be: 'I'm not feeling the same energy in the classroom, and my main focus hasn't been teaching at all … I don't like feeling as though I'm not putting everything into my teaching, and I don't get as much enjoyment with my class'. Fortunately, a senior staff member, having noticed the long hours and work-life imbalance that Ruby was experiencing, strongly urged the school's senior managers to provide better support for Ruby, which they did.

A short while later, Ruby was appointed to the position of SCT. By the end of the TOPs project, Ruby had held the position, along with her classroom teaching and HOD roles, for 4 years. Two years after taking up the SCT work, she commented:

> I have appreciated the shift from HOD to specialist classroom teacher, where the focus is much more on helping people in the classroom and actually being given the opportunity to do that. The year before, I felt that needed to be done but I didn't have the time. To be able to do that has been really rewarding. It is about helping people and working with people and doing all those things. As HOD you can certainly see the need for it, but you were pretty stuck with the paperwork and administration side of things. The two [roles] complement each other very well, and I am very happy with it.

It was obvious from Ruby's comments that the SCT work along with adequate resourcing in relation to her other two roles had rekindled her commitment and energy for the job. She explained that being an SCT had allowed her to engage in more collaborative working relationships with her colleagues, and with and from them learn more about pedagogy. It had also, importantly, meant not having to choose between being a teacher or a leader. 'I couldn't ask for a better role', she said at one point: 'It's not about leaving one thing and moving on to another, it's been develop and grow together'.

The fact that the role of SCT does not, as she often reminded us, encompass a power relationship but a learning relationship centred on classroom practice is precisely what appeals to her. The classroom observation component of her SCT role has been particularly important in this regard: 'The more I am seeing other teachers, the more I reflect on my own teaching and my own practices … When you are teaching someone else, that is obviously the best way to learn yourself, as suddenly things start to click, and when you see it in someone else, you can identify it'.

The SCT role was not without challenges though. During interviews, Ruby spoke of issues related to confidentiality and her need to be sensitive to occasions when her colleagues experienced low morale and low self-esteem. But these moments, Ruby said, were ameliorated by the lifelong learning aspect of her SCT work. She valued the opportunity to learn and reflect alongside her colleagues and not be seen as an expert. She also enjoyed sharing practice in an open culture, where dialogue about one's work was 'not about having to pretend to be perfect'. Formal learning occasions for teachers in the school, such as reading and research groups, where new strategies were discussed and critiqued, complemented her more informal learning.

The elements of Ruby's SCT role show close alignment with the components of the two leadership for learning frameworks promoted by Crowther et al. (2009) and MacBeath and Dempster (2009). These components are a focus on collegial learning, drawing on the knowledge and resources that colleagues can offer one another, a school-wide learning culture that encourages creativity and risk-taking, shared dialogue around an agreed focus, shared leadership, and shared accountability for student learning and achievement.

Quality Learning Circles (New Zealand)

This second case study focuses on leadership for learning within a group setting known as the quality learning circle (QLC). We have included this model and a description of it in action (see below) in this chapter because it offers teachers an organisational structure that allows them to meet and engage in disciplined dialogue about their practice. One of the most important features of the QLC is that the learning that occurs in the circle is shaped and led by the teachers themselves; learning is not imposed by others. Teachers thus also share leadership of the learning: they collectively decide on the learning focus and how the circle will function. The model can be used within a school or with teachers from different schools.

Stewart and Prebble (1993) suggest that while QLCs can operate in a variety of ways, three steps are typical: *selecting a focus* for the talk (this typically relates to some aspect of classroom teaching); *observing one another in classrooms* to see the focus enacted in a real setting; *reflecting on, discussing and developing collective meaning* from the shared experience. Teacher talk, according to Stewart and Prebble, is the distinguishing feature of each step of the QLC model. When teachers tell stories about what works and does not work in the classroom, they discover that

other teachers have similar concerns (Lovett 2002a). Learning within the QLC differs from that experienced in other professional learning opportunities. The latter typically reinforce more dependent cultures, where teachers come to understand that if something is important, others will tell them what they need to know. All they need to do is wait to be told (Lieberman 1995). Fullan (1993) drew attention to such dependence and passivity when he referred to teachers as the 'victims of change'. The QLC model subscribes to the notion of teachers as '*agents* of change', which Fullan prefers. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) offer another metaphor when considering the benefits of the type of learning that occurs in QLCs, that of 'awakening sleeping giants'. Such learning, they explain, lets teachers become leaders because they have opportunity to teach their colleagues what they know and at the same time learn from them. This type of leadership experience, moreover, keeps teachers connected to classroom life rather than moving away from it.

In our present times of continual curriculum change and increased calls for accountability, teachers are at risk of being overwhelmed by their professional learning and the expectation to keep up to date (Lovett 2002a). Fullan (1993) argues that learning agendas determined by others can leave teachers feeling powerless and lacking the necessary motivation because they do not see the learning as relevant to their own and their students' needs at that time. A QLC model challenges the notion that 'others know best' because it allows teachers to create learning opportunities by alternating leadership and 'followership' as colleagues bring their respective expertises to the fore in response to questions and concerns. This is teacher leadership at its best because leadership is connected to learning. It encompasses, says Frost (2006) 'human agency':

> All members of a learning community have the capacity to influence [one another] because being an agent is what being a human being is all about. Being an agent or having agency involves having a sense of self encompassing particular values and a cultural identity, and being able to pursue self-determined purposes and goals through self-conscious strategic action (p. 20).

A QLC in Action

In New Zealand, Lovett (2002a, b) and Lovett and Verstappen (2004) published accounts of two QLCs, one comprising teachers from different schools and the other comprising teachers from within the same school. The example featured here describes the journey of eight teachers from different schools who were invited to form a QLC to explore the potential of several recently released national assessment reports for classroom teachers. None of the teachers knew one another, but each wanted to learn more about the ways in which the information supplied in the reports might help them as classroom assessors. They met at fortnightly intervals for a full year, having gained teacher release time from their schools to do so. Each member agreed to trial one assessment from a report and to share her experience with the other circle members. Each meeting thus included a minimum of eight

assessment tasks for discussion. As time passed, the members established respect and trust for one another and became more open in sharing insights from their practice. They found the regularity of the shared talk about teaching with other interested colleagues stimulating, affirming and beneficial to their practice.

None of these teachers would initially have described her QLC experience in terms of leadership for learning or teacher leadership, because this particular QLC included a facilitator who took responsibility for working with the group to establish an agreed protocol for the fortnightly meetings and to determine which report to focus on at each meeting. The facilitator was careful not to convey expert knowledge about the reports but instead prepared summaries of the assessment tasks to focus the teachers on the content of the reports. The facilitator then invited the teachers to talk about ways in which they might use the assessment tasks or information reported from the national testing to inform their own teaching programmes. She modelled being a teacher–leader–learner to the circle and expected each member to do the same. In time, they did.

The eight teachers also had opportunities to observe one another in their classrooms. The observations were a paired event, with each teacher taking turns as an observer-learner in the partner's classroom. The teachers planned and agreed on a particular aspect of classroom learning as the focus of the observations. However, getting the teachers ready and willing to participate in these observations was not easy. Their initial enthusiasm for moving beyond their own classrooms waned when they realised the risks associated with having another teacher observe their practice. They did not want to disappoint their observer–learner and felt particularly anxious about trialling assessment tasks that were new to them. These feelings fortunately dissipated as the teachers became immersed in the experience and realised that the others had the same initial disquiet. Rich discussions eventually followed each observation session. In the end, all teachers said they had found having 'fresh pairs of eyes' observe their practice and their students' capabilities extremely valuable.

Table 40.1 provides examples of the ways in which the QLC helped the eight teachers develop the mindset and skills to engage in teacher leadership for learning activities.

Through their collective experience of the QLC, the teachers demonstrated that teachers can become leaders without being conscious of doing so. This again suggests that the traditional notion of what it means to be a leader can be a stumbling block with respect to leadership for learning. Barth (1985) maintains that teachers should stop complaining and take charge of their own directions for learning, arguing 'if principals and teachers don't want to be the dependent variable in attempts to improve schools, they will have to become the independent variable' (p. 357). Teacher leadership has the potential to keep schools focused on their core business, by allowing teachers to teach one another what they know about teaching, learning and leading. Teachers can be leaders if they believe in the connections between collegial cultures and improved learning and teaching. But they cannot do this by themselves, which is why principals (the people who can supply the needed release time for talk) and teachers need to make it happen together. This consideration is explored in the next case study.

Table 40.1 Benefits of the QLC model

Benefit	Teachers' comments
Reduces teachers' isolation	'It's great being with a variety of different teachers … just talking with other teachers and getting their ideas'. (Lara)
	'We are never sure what others are doing. I think it is important to know what is going on across the city … the opportunities to do anything outside the school are so rare'. (Lois)
Structured meetings	'I probably wouldn't have done anything as in-depth on my own … I wouldn't have done it without the meetings'. (Lois)
Sharing what works in the classroom	'I think being able to share with each other the things we were doing … has prodded us into, 'Oh, that looks all right. Oh, I think I can handle that one', and I'll have a go at it. The meetings have developed into a style that's functional and effective'. (Diane)
Active engagement with teaching resources	'The meetings have encouraged me to use the resources … I look forward to seeing everybody and seeing how they've gone on the tasks … I'm always enthused when I go away to try some of the activities'. (Katrina)
Time to talk	'As teachers we need time to reflect, and this situation with the QLC is perfect … It's people who have similar interests or experiences … It's actual time to talk to other people about what we do. As a teacher I don't get enough of that'. (Lois)
Shared leadership and learning	'Here we have to do an equal amount to bring to it because we are all helping each other … I think the QLC is good because we have some sort of ownership of it'. (Mavis)

Whole-School Improvement (Australia)

The two cases presented here are drawn from research[1] into teacher leaders working as members and facilitators of in-school-management teams – called IDEAS[2] school-management teams – during whole-school change. The two cases (further below) focus in particular on the role of teacher leadership in leading the whole-school *ideas* process in the IDEAS project.

IDEAS is a whole-school revitalisation program developed by researchers at the Leadership Research Institute, University of Southern Queensland (USQ). Ten years in the making, the programme is the result of thinking, dialoguing and critiquing by educators from schools, education systems and the university. It operates in schools throughout Australia and in Singapore. The conceptual base of IDEAS is captured in Fig. 40.1.

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[1] See Andrews et al. (2011), Andrews and Crowther (2003, 2006), Andrews and Lewis (2000, 2007), Chesterton and Duignan (2004), Cuttance (2001), and Crowther et al. (2002, 2009).

[2] Innovative Design for Enhancing Achievement in Schools.
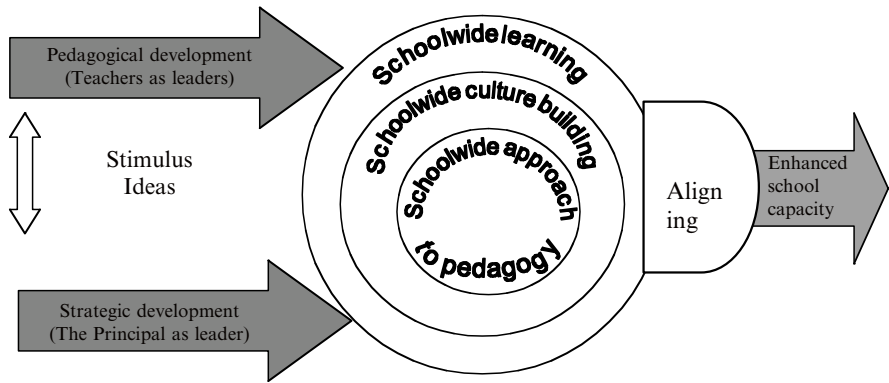
Fig. 40.1 The contribution of parallel leadership to school improvement. (Crowther et al. (2009), p. 66)

Table 40.2 Key aspects of teacher and principal roles relative to effective leading for learning: case study findings

Role of teachers		Role of the principal/formal leader
Leading learning of professional learning communities	Leading whole-school improvement	
• Develop collaboration	• Engage and motivate colleagues	• Enable
• Use disciplined dialogue	• Work with 'other leaders'	• Facilitate re-culturing
• Enhance and deepen the learning of others and their practice	• Use professional dialogue	
	• Develop new ways of working	

IDEAS emphasises the most essential findings of research on school improvement (revitalisation), that is, enhanced school outcomes are most likely to occur as a result of collaborative action involving whole-school strategies (Cuttance 2001; Newmann and Wehlage 1995). The process of school improvement is led by principals (meta-strategic development) in a mutualistic relationship with teachers (pedagogical development) – the concept of parallel leadership. Parallel leadership engages processes of professional learning, culture building and school-wide pedagogy (SWP) so as to enhance a school's overall capacity to produce positive outcomes for students.

Central to IDEAS are five operational principles of practice: (1) teachers are the key to successful school revitalisation (see Table 40.2); (2) professional learning is best thought of as a shared collegial process within each school; (3) a 'no blame' mindset should permeate organisational problem-solving; (4) a 'success breeds success' approach should guide teachers' analyses of their professional practices; and (5) alignment of school processes is a collective responsibility. Adherence to these

principles provides a deliberate basis for the professional community to create, within their school community, a renewed purpose and revitalised practices. These principles come into effect in the IDEAS program through engagement with four structural and process concepts, described in Crowther et al. (2002):

- *A research-based framework (RBF) for enhancing school outcomes*: this organisational framework provides teachers and principals with a conceptual model, based on a diagnostic review, for thinking collaboratively about their school and what they want it to become.
- *Parallel leadership*: this relatedness between principals and teachers has three distinct characteristics – mutualism, a sense of shared purpose, and allowance for individual expression (Crowther et al. 2009, p. 54).
- *Three-dimensional pedagogy*: this concept provides a framework that 'enables teachers to dialogue … [so that] deeply embedded pedagogical practices are shared and new levels of pedagogical insight can be generated' (Andrews and Crowther 2006, p. 537). It also encompasses a particular view of teacher leadership focused on the capacity for teacher leaders to influence, and exercise agency for their professional communities. These teacher leaders facilitate action by engaging with other members of their professional learning community in order to revitalise teaching and learning within the school, to confront barriers to improvement and to translate ideas into sustainable systems of action.
- *The ideas process*: this process of professional inquiry encompasses five conceptually linked phases – initiating, discovering, envisioning, actioning and sustaining. This process takes 2–3 years to work through and requires the establishment of an internal school-management team assisted by external (university) facilitators. Of central importance is the development of a distinctive school vision and associated SWP.

Having explained the basis of the IDEAS Project, two cases are used to highlight the role teachers' leadership and learning play in its implementation.

Edmont College – Sally's Story

Although Edmont College, a large Year 4–12 boys' school in an Australian city, had proved relatively successful in respect of student achievement, the newly appointed principal decided to review the currency of the school's teaching practice. He saw IDEAS as a way of enabling the whole staff to become engaged in a teacher-led renewal process. The principal selected two facilitators, one of whom was Sally. This is her story.

> After attending the IDEAS introductory workshop run by the USQ team, I was very encouraged—in fact enthusiastic about—what this process could offer the teaching community. The principal was very supportive and provided time for me to familiarise myself with the process. He sent Rod [the other nominated facilitator] and me to visit other IDEAS schools. On return, we spoke with the staff about our 'fact-finding mission' and set up a

voluntary IDEAS school management team [(ISMT] to manage the process on behalf of the staff. Fourteen members volunteered, and we met every fortnight for breakfast to work on the process.

We had a visit from the university team member who spoke with the ISMT about the 'discovering process' and the role of the ISMT. Rod and I also attended a workshop where we engaged in 'learning how to run' workshops with the staff. We have had lots of change in a staff that is not used to change, and a cultural audit completed late last year indicated many concerning internal issues. The ISMT organised the DI [Diagnostic Inventory] implementation, collated the results and arranged with the USQ team to run the 'report writing' workshop.

The workshop was great. Most staff participated positively (the principles of practice helped as did the rules for skilful discussion), and most believed they had been listened to and were prepared to work together to address issues raised in the DI. The tensions evident in some staff groups and the 'big voices' were managed through the conversation protocols and the presence of the external facilitator. The report from the community made it evident that the school did not have an inspirational vision, did not work together or have time to share successful practice. In fact, time for PD [professional development] was a major issue. If we were to have a process that engaged the whole staff, then we needed to have blocks of time, but where would this come from?

At the next ISMT meeting, we organised to get the 'school report card' written up and into the newsletter. We also talked about how we could get time to meet as a whole staff, especially in a school like ours, with so much extra-curricular activity. The best we could do was to take some of the staff meeting times. The principal then came up with a great suggestion. He was negotiating to have time at the end of the semester—a whole week—for PD, and IDEAS would be given priority. We got two days.

The ISMT linked in with the USQ team member and worked out an agenda for the PD days. We would do the envisioning activity and develop out SWP, but there was a lot of planning to be done. I believed we needed to involve the students at this stage, so set up an IDEAS student team as a sub-committee of the student council. The students became very active in the process, and through a series of activities Rod and I came up with … what emerged were some visioning statements that we would share with staff on the day as well as 'successful teaching practices'. In fact, I will get the students to present to the staff!

The members of the ISMT actively engaged in preparing for the PD days, and we invited the USQ team member to join in as a critical friend. We were feeling very confident at managing the process but felt it would be useful to have this support. Several ISMT prepared the 'History Walk' and several others toured the school to digitally capture images of 'teaching at Edmont View College'. Others organised the logistics—school artefacts, pens, photo cards, butcher's paper… we were ready.

The first day started with input from the 'founding fathers group', and this was followed by the History Walk. Wow, what a powerful session! It was great to follow our 70-year history and realise that we had undergone a lot of changes, high and low points, and a number (a lot less than we thought) of teachers who had been here for over 30 years. We now looked forward to the second day.

The day started with an input from the students, and we then ran several 'visioning workshops', coming up, at the end of the day, with a 'proposed vision' —*Achieving Excellence.* Again, staff were very engaged, and the ISMT were feeling that they had managed the process well and accomplished what they had planned. The next day was exploration into pedagogy. The USQ team member assisted the team in the organisation and facilitation. We shared the 'teaching at Edmont' video, and explored successful practices. Synthesis enabled us to tease out our emerging school-wide pedagogical principles. This would give the ISMT enough information from the staff to synthesise and feedback to them over the next semester.

The ISMT continued to meet every fortnight for breakfast, and I also met with the student ISMT. We had, by the end of the year, our vision—the students had modified it to

Achieving Today, Leading Tomorrow, and the staff endorsed it (with enthusiasm!). We now worked on our school-wide pedagogical principles. Data were synthesised, sent to the university team for comment, discussed with heads of department and staff. We finally ended up with the '5C' school-wide pedagogy. The ISMT then designed a school promotional brochure—what an achievement!

The new year presented us with another challenge. We attended the next IDEAS workshop, where we got to share with other schools what we had achieved. We were proud of our achievements and received good feedback from other schools in the cluster. Now we were faced with 'actioning our SWP'. We looked at the new workshop materials and decided this would take some planning in this semester to enable a major planning exercise to happen at our PD week at the end of the semester. The school had [before IDEAS] adopted a pedagogical framework [Bloom's taxonomy], and now the system has imposed a new curriculum framework and an authoritative pedagogical framework which we would have to respond to as a school. IDEAS should be able to act as an umbrella—or that is what we are told!

It is now time for the ISMT—myself, Rod and the head of Academic Studies—to work together on a major project of embedding our vision and SWP into our professional conversations, curriculum planning and professional development. I had to keep reminding myself that the ISMT were there to manage the process. Through working across the school with HODs [heads of department] and HOY [heads of year], we developed a template for planning and a process that would be used by all departments.

The PD days were run by the HODs and HOYs developing common units of work, which were then shared in a feedback session. What a great experience for all. Staff got to talk and work together as they had never done before: we had a common language and professional conversation protocols that sustained the richness of the conversation and enabled people to work together. This marked a significant point in which we had come to—a definite change of culture in the way we worked, took responsibility and became collectively accountable.

The ISMT, Rod and I have continued to operate as an acknowledged working group—some members have left and others have joined. We have continued to work on planning, working with other committees to develop processes of pedagogical review, and promotion. The principal has also changed. The new principal is well informed of what we have achieved and our plans for the future.

Fairweather Place – Anne's Story

Fairweather Place, a primary school established in 1995 in a rapidly growing suburb of a major regional city, has 450 students. It considers itself a forward-thinking innovative school that promotes academic excellence while catering for a diverse range of students. The school entered the IDEAS project 4 years ago. Anne, a specialist teacher at the school, grew into the role of IDEAS facilitator. She relates, in her story, both her actions and her growing confidence as a leader of whole-school learning. Anne also recounts how her cross-school cluster leadership developed over time.

I came to the school just after the school had started IDEAS and was encouraged to join the ISMT during the visioning phase, as I could see the benefits of being part of the team. One of our ISMT facilitators left, and I felt that, as we were progressing further into the vision phase, I could contribute my artistic ability to the process. The jacaranda tree featured as our school emblem; we wanted to keep the image. I could see how we could use that image to capture what the staff wanted as their school vision—*Growing Together, Learning Forever*. I was also the music teacher and, as such, had contact across

the school with students, parents and staff. This enabled me to feed back to the ISMT a broad perspective and commentary. The principal began including me in more and more planning sessions, as I believe he valued my input, as I did not belong to any year-level group or faction.

When John, the lead ISMT facilitator was finding this job, along with his other commitments, too demanding, I volunteered to take on the co-facilitation role. We were a perfect team. He was an analytical thinker, great with IT [information technology], and had been a facilitator from the start, but was starting to have less and less time to devote to IDEAS as his IT-expert role in the school grew. I was a visual thinker who could pull threads together into pictures and was enthusiastic and eager to take on the challenge to move our school forward now that a picture of how was emerging in my mind. The ISMT actively engaged even the most disengaged in designing across-school activities that were seen to be 'fun'.

The ISMT were keen to ensure that whatever we did should be integrated. We had, while engaging with IDEAS, completed an action research project on multi-literacies, and the celebration of what we had achieved to progress our pedagogical understandings as a collective was an invigorating and empowering experience for staff. Working on a school project such as this meshed in well with our exploration of pedagogy in IDEAS. The pieces of the puzzle were fitting together very nicely. My confidence as a leader was growing, and although a small number of teachers would still infer, 'What would the music teacher know about our classroom issues?', many teachers were coming to me with suggestions or concerns, knowing that I would follow through with these in some way or another.

The benefits of being part of a cluster of IDEAS schools really came into play as I grappled with having more and more of the responsibility of organising workshops and synthesising what came out of them. The principal was supportive. However, what other schools were doing, along with insights and advice from other ISMT school facilitators, gave me new ideas and spurred me on to progress the process in my school. I was more and more comfortable to ask for advice from USQ staff and the system's IDEAS coordinator, who provided knowledge and inspiration.

The final formation of our vision—*Growing Together*—and SWP basically occurred at the same time due to the richness of the conversations that had occurred over a two-year period of working with multiliteracies, productive pedagogies and other external authoritative sources. The first application of the vision and values came out of the conversations that the ISMT were having with parents and staff around a concern for the socially unacceptable behaviour that was occurring more frequently within the school. The guidance officer and a team of teachers had been working on the creation of a social skills program that could be run as part of our curriculum delivery. The talk and planning had been going on for six months or so but not really progressing. There was a sense of urgency developing, though, that something needed to be done.

I was asked by my principal to lend a hand. His faith in my ability to move the process forward was an indicator of how far I had moved in my leadership abilities and the confidence with which I could face a new challenge. Very soon our Guidance for Life Programme, which later came to be called our Visions Programme, came into being, and I found myself running after-school arts in-service courses to upskill teachers, as the teacher survey had agreed that the arts would be a perfect vehicle by which to deliver the visions programme.

As my confidence and ability had grown, I began to present at IDEAS forums and assist other schools to move forward in their IDEAS journey. I participated in teleconferences and interstate IDEAS trips with the USQ IDEAS team. My insights from the practical-teacher, hands-on point of view were valued and this, in turn, prompted us to want to contribute more. I commenced study again for the first time in 25 years, as I felt that there were many things I needed to know more about.

As time has progressed, IDEAS has become our way of working. The school has brought in a new principal—perhaps fortunate that she came with an understanding of IDEAS. The

word IDEAS has disappeared and been replaced by a way of working that adheres to the principles of practice and the use of professional conversation protocols. Systems of action have been embedded in planning, in our conversations and in our induction program for new staff and students. The school continues to respond to new challenges. Annual operational plans and school reviews are written in the Research Based Framework (RBF) format; the RBF is also used for review of school practices and planning by staff and students.

Discussion

Our case studies from two countries demonstrate the benefits of teachers working with one another to deepen their classroom practices and illustrate what can happen when schools take responsibility for providing the organisational structures that allow this learning to happen. The studies show that leadership for learning is about teachers having conversations with one another about their concerns with practice – conversations that are focused, deliberate and not left to chance encounters. When time is put aside to converse, teachers who have learnt to value their colleagues as sources of learning are able to teach one another what they know about teaching, learning and leading. In this way, teachers maximise their collective strengths as they learn to support and grow with one another. At the same time, they develop leadership skills as they attend to the ways in which their colleagues and students are learning in their shared quests for improvements to pedagogy. Leadership therefore becomes a co-constructed activity that has particular meaning for teachers because they see it as directly linked to their core concern of raising student achievement.

The link between leadership and learning is evident in all four case studies. While some of the teachers in our case studies had held formal leadership roles, others demonstrated leadership activities without being formally recognised as leaders. That they did not necessarily see their work as leadership suggests that the teaching profession continues to equate leadership with a position distanced from the classroom rather than closely linked to classroom learning. In this regard it is interesting to note the tensions experienced in the SCT role between encouraging teacher learners to reveal their learning needs and school-management's desire to know the details of that learning. If leadership can be reframed to emphasise the work teachers do alongside one another as learners, then it has the potential to be viewed as an exciting prospect and the means by which to sustain and invigorate teachers as they continue their teaching careers.

The information provided by the case studies presented in this chapter aligns with the tenets of the leadership for learning (MacBeath and Dempster 2009) and teachers as leaders (Crowther et al. 2009, p. 3) frameworks that describe what teacher leaders do as leaders. First, the studies highlight different forms of leading learning, that is, leading professional learning communities and leading whole-school development. Second the cases highlight the need to rethink the roles and responsibilities of principals and teachers in today's schools. And, third, the studies show the need for changes to school-level organisational structures and cultures, so that teachers can emerge and be accepted as leaders of learning, and be valued in this role.

Organisational changes include providing time and space for teachers to meet with one another, to create a shared language arising out of disciplined dialogue about issues and concerns over practice and thereby link, in turn, leadership activities to learning. Cultures that value and enable leadership for learning are defined by processes that promote the distribution of leadership (leadership density) throughout the school community, as evidenced by the case study teachers who led and motivated one another in professional learning communities in order to critique and eventually transform their classroom learning practices. These cultures also have principals able to work with teacher leaders in trusting relationships that encourage the critique of practice, experimentation, and risk-taking in order to create alternative ways of responding effectively to the challenges within today's schools (Bryk and Schneider 2002).

Conclusion

Given that positional leadership within schools (particularly the principalship) tends to be seen today as an unattractive option by many because of its paperwork and compliance emphases, it is highly necessary that we reframe leadership in terms of the collective work teachers do alongside one another. If we can change our conception of leadership from that of a power relationship driven by account-ability to one that is more collaborative, student-focused and distributed, then teachers will be more likely to find room for leadership activities. They will see that such activities provide them with the tools to constantly reflect on their own work as they work alongside others. It is collaborative rather than individualistic cultures that nurture teacher leaders. Existing senior leaders need to make room for teacher leaders and recognise the ways in which they, too, can support one another, which is why the concept of parallel leadership has appeal. However, for parallel leadership to impact on schools, closer attention is needed to 'awaken the sleeping giant' of teachers as leaders, for it is the teachers, close to the action in classrooms, who hold the keys for linking leadership with learning.

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Chapter 41
Instructional Supervision, Coherence, and Job-Embedded Learning

Sally J. Zepeda

Introduction

Teachers are at the core of learning; therefore, learning for teachers must remain foundational to the work of leaders (Frost and Durant 2003; York-Barr and Duke 2004; Zepeda 2006). With this imperative, more careful and thoughtful analysis is needed for school leaders who assume the responsibility to support and nurture teacher growth and development (Zepeda 2006, 2007). By meeting the learning needs of teachers, school leaders – regardless of title or position – promote lifelong learning skills such as inquiry, reflection, and collaboration. These are the aspirational goals inherent in instructional supervision, professional development, and teacher evaluation. Needed is coherence to provide purposeful linkages between supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation, and other practices (e.g., peer coaching, action research, critical friends) that support learning for adults. More research is required to further the understanding of the nature of job-embedded learning.

Given the structure of school systems in the United States and beyond, principals, headmasters, and other leaders, by virtue of their positions, are responsible for the growth and development of teachers (Wei et al. 2009). However, instructional supervision, by itself, is not enough because as Whitcomb et al. (2009) asserted, "teaching is a complex intellectual and emotional task. Learning to teach well is a developmental process that unfolds over time when teachers have appropriate support and opportunities to learn" (p. 207). If teachers are to emerge as professionals who are constantly learning from the work of teaching, then supportive environments must be created to sustain more collaborative and inquiring practices (Zepeda 2006). The literature on empowerment supports this point-of-view:

> Teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting...by collaborating with other teachers...
> and by sharing what they see. This type of learning enables teachers to make the leap from

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theory to accomplished practice. Such learning requires a setting that supports teacher inquiry and collaboration and strategies grounded in teachers' questions and concerns. To understand deeply, teachers must learn about, see, and experience successful learning-centered…teaching practices. (Darling-Hammond 1998, p. 5)

To meet the call for more support for teachers, leaders need to examine practices (e.g., peer coaching, portfolio development, and action research) that promote growth and development; however, this examination must go beyond looking at one practice at a time, implementing it, and then moving onto the next one.

Leaders need to break out of the black box in which supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation, and other practices such as peer coaching, action research, and portfolio development, are "offered" as discrete activities. Instructional supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation, and other support programs such as mentoring (Feiman-Nemser 2000; Wang and Odell 2002), peer coaching (Arnau et al. 2004; Bloom and Goldstein 2000), faculty study groups (Murphy and Lick 2004), action research (Glanz 2005), and portfolio development (Zepeda 2002, 2007) bundled as a comprehensive support program that can provide job-embedded learning opportunities for teachers.

To start the discussion, the intents of instructional supervision, professional development, and evaluation are examined. Next, the coherence model (Zepeda 2007) is presented as one way to bundle teacher growth and development, serving as a framework to guide the work needed to support teachers. The foundations of job-embedded learning provide a framework for nestling growth opportunities and processes of supervision. Finally, promising practices related to the portfolio as a way to extend the clinical supervisory model are offered.

The Intents of Instructional Supervision, Teacher Evaluation, and Professional Development

Instructional Supervision

Instructional supervision is concerned with classroom observations as in clinical supervision, peer coaching, and other technologies that allow teachers to examine their own classroom practices with and through the assistance of others. Instructional supervision aims to promote growth, development, interaction, fault-free problem solving, and a commitment to build capacity in teachers. Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer (1969), the early framers of clinical supervision, envisioned practices that would position the teacher as an active learner. Moreover, Cogan asserted that teachers were able to be professionally responsible and more than able to be "analytical of their own performance, open to help from others, and self-directing" (p. 12).

Another important characteristic of instructional supervision is the social aspect that it promotes (Unruh and Turner 1970). Unruh and Turner saw supervision as "a social process of stimulating, nurturing, and appraising the professional growth of teachers" (p. 17) and the supervisor as "the prime mover in the development of

optimum conditions for learning" for adults (p. 135). When teachers learn from examining their own practices with the assistance of peers or supervisors, their learning is more personalized, relevant, and embedded within the context in which teaching occurs – the classroom.

The intents of instructional supervision are formative, concerned with ongoing, developmental, and differentiated approaches that enable teachers to learn from analyzing and reflecting on their classroom practices with the assistance of another professional (Glatthorn 1984, 1990; Glickman 1990; Goldhammer et al. 1993; Zepeda 2007). Zepeda (2007) outlined the intents of supervision that promote:

- Face-to-face interaction and relationship building between the teacher and supervisor (Acheson and Gall 1997; Bellon and Bellon 1982; Goldhammer 1969; McGreal 1983)
- Ongoing learning for the teacher and the supervisor (Mosher and Purpel 1972)
- The improvement of students' learning through improvement of the teacher's instruction (Blumberg 1980; Cogan 1973; Harris 1975)
- Data-based decision making (Bellon and Bellon 1982)
- Capacity building of individuals and the organization (Pajak 1993)
- Trust in the processes, each other, and the environment (Costa and Garmston 1994)
- Change that results in better developmental life for teachers and students and their learning (Sergiovanni and Starratt 1998)

Within the field of instructional supervision are two constructs noteworthy to examine – differentiated supervision (Glatthorn 1990, 1997) and developmental supervision (Glickman 1981; Glickman et al. 2010).

Research has shown that instructional supervision that is differentiated across the career continuum is necessary to support teacher growth and development (Glatthorn 1997; Sullivan and Glanz 2009; Zepeda 2007). Glatthorn (1997) described differentiated supervision as "an approach to supervision that provides teachers with options about the kinds of supervisory and evaluative services they receive" (p. 3). Differentiated supervision operates on the premise that teaching is a profession; teachers should have a degree of control over their professional development; and teachers should have the authority to make choices about the support they need (Zepeda 2007). Differentiated supervision can unfold only in an environment in which collegial relationships are built through "cooperation and mutual assistance" (Glatthorn 1990, p. 177).

Glickman (1981) asserted that "the goal of instructional supervision is to help teachers learn how to increase their own capacity to achieve professional learning goals for their students" (p. 3) and a supervisor's style either enhances or diminishes teachers' abilities to engage in learning that is developmentally appropriate. The success of developmental supervision rests on the supervisor's ability to assess the conceptual level of the teacher or a group of teachers and then to apply a supervisory approach that matches this level (Glickman 1981; Glickman et al. 2010). Ham's findings (1986), cited by Waite (1998), suggested, "The most effective supervisors were those able to match appropriate models or strategies to the specific needs and developmental levels of their teachers" (p. 300). For supervisors and teachers,

there is a need to understand the principles of adult learning and development (Merriam et al. 2007) and career stage theory (Burden 1982a, b; Burke et al. 1984). Differentiated and developmental supervision promotes:

- The investigation of practice through experimentation, observation of others, and discovery.
- The determination of the type of supervision by the individual based on self-perceived needs.
- The teacher as learner situated as active participant in the experience of learning in the company of others through formulating hypotheses about practices and developing and testing alternatives in practices.
- Interactions with others in constructing and reconstructing practices – lesson reconstruction.
- Nonjudgmental feedback and open exchanges with others.
- Self-directed learning.

From such an understanding comes the acknowledgment of the diverse needs of teachers and the constructs needed to plan for professional development and other job-embedded learning opportunities for teachers. Teacher evaluation also must be factored into the equation of working with teachers, and although differences exist between supervision and evaluation, there are aspects of evaluation that should not be discounted, fueling the flame that supervision and evaluation are diametrically in opposition.

Teacher Evaluation

Whereas supervision is a formative process, teacher evaluation is summative. Ideally, teacher evaluation occurs as a complement to formative supervision. The purposes of evaluation and supervision are often "at odds" with each other (Ponticell and Zepeda 2004); however, these purposes should not be in direct opposition as both can support the improvement of instruction (Acheson and Gall 1997; Zepeda 2007). Koppich (2000) put forth that teacher evaluation predicated on a summative model was outmoded because:

- It is top-down, requiring little or no involvement on the part of teachers themselves.
- It applies the same teaching standards and criteria, which are often unclear or unstated, to all teachers regardless of years of experience.
- Principals are often not well trained in conducting evaluations, and rarely have adequate time to do so effectively.
- Research has shown that principals' ratings are not useful in improving instruction.
- There is little evidence to suggest that it is possible to generalize about an individual's professional competence based on a small number of brief observations.
- Even if the evaluation is based on so-called best practices, it does not adequately assess the quality of instruction or the quality of student learning.
- Nearly everyone is rated at least "satisfactory" (Koppich 2000, p. 21).

Much of the inherent conflict and tension between supervision and evaluation stemmed from the intent or final outcome of evaluation. Acheson and Gall (1997) aptly highlighted the conflict between evaluation and supervision:

> One of the most persistent problems in supervision is the dilemma between (1) evaluating a teacher in order to make decisions about retention, promotion, and tenure, and (2) working with the teacher as a friendly critic or colleague to help develop skills the teacher wants to use and to expand the repertoire of strategies that can be employed. (p. 209)

Peterson (2000) suggested several new directions for teacher evaluation that could help to bridge the gulf between supervision and evaluation. Peterson asserted that evaluative practices that support a formative perspective:

- Emphasize that the function of teacher evaluation should be to seek out, document, and acknowledge the good teaching that already exists.
- Place the teacher at the center of evaluation activity.
- Limit administrator judgment role in teacher evaluation.
- Use multiple data sources to inform judgments about teacher quality.
- When possible, include actual pupil achievement data.
- Use variable data sources to inform judgments (about teaching).
- Spend the time and other resources needed to recognize good teaching.
- Use the results of teacher evaluation to encourage the development of a personal professional dossier, publicize aggregated results, and support teacher promotion systems (pp. 4–12).

Under optimum circumstances, supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development should be unified to bring coherence to teacher learning and development efforts.

Professional Development

Professional development as a complement to supervision and teacher evaluation helps to create coherence between and across all efforts that aim to help teachers grow, evolve, and emerge as professionals through the day-to-day work they do. Darling-Hammond (2003) shared "Great school leaders create nurturing school environments in which accomplished teaching can flourish and grow" (p. 13), and this is why professional development that is job embedded and linked to supervisory efforts is important. "*Professional development is learning*" (Zepeda 2008, p. 1), but "the real learning happens in the cycle of conversations, actions, evaluation, and new actions that is supported through intentional leadership that gently pressures and nurtures teachers" (Moller and Pankake 2006, p. 128).

Professional development that is linked to supervisory efforts allows teachers and leaders to learn from the work they do, the work students do, and the work teachers do with other teachers. In between cycles of the clinical supervisory model (preobservation, classroom observation, postobservation conference), follow-up learning opportunities (e.g., professional development) helps the teacher focus on

areas that bubbled up from the data from the classroom observation and discussed in the postobservation conference. Subsequent classroom observations could then focus on these targeted areas.

Through purposeful and targeted follow-up by supervisors, peer coaches, and mentors, professional development connects to learning goals established by the teacher in the postobservation conference. Teachers need:

- Follow-up support to ensure that lessons learned in formal and informal professional development are being transferred into practice.
- The opportunity to learn from their actual work through job-embedded learning opportunities.

A research base supports what we know about *effective* professional development. The word, effective, is used to describe practices that are research based, tied to standards, and presents a coherent structure for professional development. To this end, professional development is not an add-on, and professional development is not a series of discrete activities (Zepeda 2005, 2008).

Regardless of its form, professional development is effective if it is ongoing, long term, related to the teacher's content area, and embedded within the work day (Garet et al. 2001; Hess 2008). Table 41.1 details optimal professional development practices and the key research.

Although there is some debate about linking professional development with gains in student learning, there is enough evidence to show that professional development can support student learning; moreover, students need to know that their

Table 41.1 Optimal Professional Development and Key Research

Optimal practices	Research
Professional development extends over time	Garet et al. (2001), Loucks-Horsley et al. (1998), and Porter et al. (2003)
Professional development includes planned follow-up	Corcoran (1995), Garet et al. (2001), Joyce and Showers (1995)
Professional development is job embedded connecting to the work of teaching (relevance)	Ancess (2000), Borko (2004), Wood and Killian (1998), Wood and McQuarrie (1999)
Professional development is content specific and related to subject matter	Birman et al. (2000), Corcoran (1995), Garet et al. (2001), Porter et al. (2003)
Professional development promotes reflection and inquiry	Guskey (1999) and Loucks-Horsley et al. (1998)
Professional development includes multiple modalities of learning – active engagement	Joyce and Showers (1995), Garet et al. (2001), and Porter et al. (2003)
Professional development is site based including teachers from the same grade level and subject area	Corcoran (1995), Garet et al. (2001), and Porter et al. (2003)
Professional development is based on student performance data	Kazemi and Franke (2003), McDonald (2001), and Sparks (1995)

Zepeda (2008). Used with permission

teachers are active learners. As a complement to supervision and teacher evaluation, professional development serves to add coherence to these processes as they work in tandem.

The Coherence Model

Instructional supervision, clinical supervision, or any other form of in-classroom supervision that aims to foster the professional growth of teachers cannot be reduced to a lockstep linear process with a fixed beginning or end (Zepeda 2000, 2006). The processes involved in supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation must be cyclical and ongoing. The process known as clinical supervision was originally designed to continue in cycles, with each cycle (preobservation, observation, and postobservation) informing future cycles and identifying the activities needed to help teachers meet their learning objectives. Professional development and teacher evaluation must be linked to instructional supervision, embedded within and throughout the workday for teachers.

What is needed is a model that connects the various forms of assistance available to teachers. However, no one model can ever be expected to fit the needs of every teacher and the contexts in which they work. There are ways to bridge supervision, professional development, and teacher evaluation with other processes including peer coaching, action research, the portfolio, and mentoring, for example.

In *The Centerless Corporation: A New Model for Transforming Your Organization for Growth and Prosperity*, Pasternak and Viscio (1998) described a type of unity they called coherence:

> Coherence is what holds the firm together. It is the glue that binds the various pieces, enabling them to act as one. It includes a broad range of processes. It begins with a shared vision and shared set of values, and expands to include numerous linkages across the company. (p. 61)

This shared vision and set of values can serve to solidify supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation, and other learning opportunities, but more importantly, this shared vision related and unified them. The Coherence Model (Zepeda 2007) as depicted in Fig. 41.1 illustrates the interdependence of the parts of the model.

Woven together in a holistic way, learning opportunities follow their own course while contributing to the overall development of the faculty and the organization. To be valuable, an approach must be flexible, adaptable to a particular environment, and shaped by people who apply it.

The Coherence Model offers a framework for unifying professional development, supervisory, and evaluation practices that promote growth and development. Implicit assumptions are that the work of supervision is recursive and that all approaches to supervision and professional development employ processes that
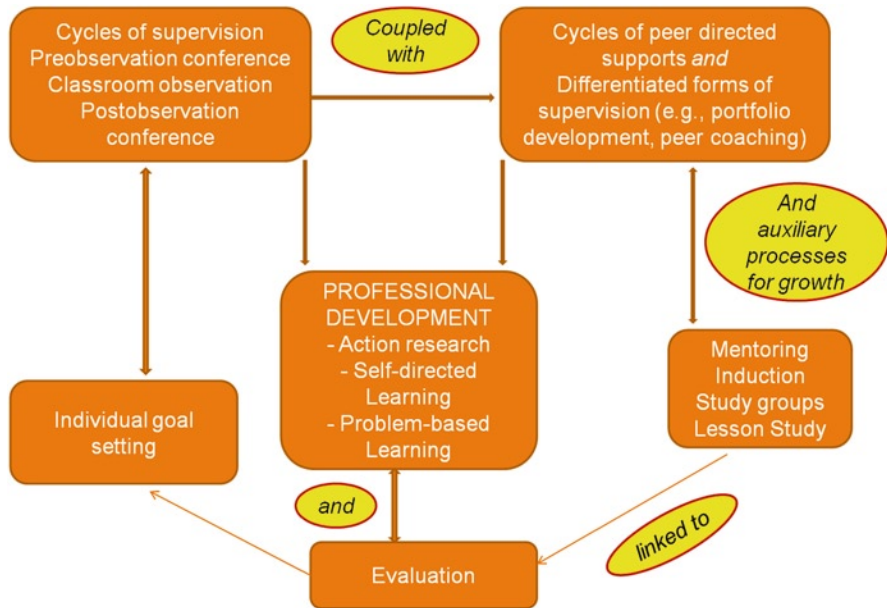
Fig. 41.1 The Coherence Model – Linking Instructional Supervision, Professional Development, and Teacher Evaluation. (Zepeda (2007). Used with permission)

promote growth, including reflection, inquiry, and dialog. The basic premise is that supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation, and other efforts form a seamless web of support for teacher growth and development.

Providing for coherence will not "just happen." The leadership of the supervisor is needed to promote and champion these connections and to work proactively with teachers supporting the development of more coherent and seamless approaches to professional learning. At the core of coherence is the construct of job-embedded learning.

Job-Embedded Supervisory Approaches

Within the field of professional development is the notion of the efficacy in learning when learning is embedded in the workday and tailored to individual needs (Hess 2008; Zepeda 2008). McLaughlin and Oberman (1996) indicated that administrators and others responsible for professional growth need to "recognize the importance of embedding teachers' learning in everyday activities" (p. x). There are several options for embedding supervision into the teacher's workday (Pajak 1993; Zepeda 2007). These include more collegial forms of supervision (e.g., peer coaching and cognitive coaching), informal supervision, and inquiry-based supervision

(e.g., action research) – all supporting differentiated and developmental aspects of learning for teachers. Explored later in this chapter is the use of the portfolio as a means to extend the clinical supervisory model (Zepeda 2002, 2007). Underpinning all these techniques is the conviction that teachers are professionals who can take responsibility for their own learning.

Wood and Killian (1998) defined job-embedded learning as "learning that occurs as teachers and administrators engage in their daily work activities" (p. 52). Among their findings was the conclusion that schools must:

> restructure supervision and teacher evaluation so that they support teacher learning and the achievement of personal, professional, and school achievement goals…both supervision and teacher evaluation should be modified to focus on school and/or personal improvement goals rather than the district and state required observation forms. (p. 54)

Instructional supervision – supervision that seeks to guide growth and learning – reaches its fullest potential when woven into the everyday professional activities of teachers. Job-embedded supervision:

- Enhances reflection
- Promotes collegiality
- Combats isolation
- Makes supervision more relevant to each teacher
- Increases transfer of newly learned skills
- Supports the ongoing refinement of practice
- Fosters a common lexicon that facilitates dialog and improvement (Zepeda 2007, 2008)

The concept of job-embedded learning evolved, in part, from adult learning theory (Lindeman 1926), and the discussion about job-embedded learning would not be complete without examining some basic principles of adult learning. Moreover, given the diversity of the teaching force and the varied experience levels of any given faculty, supervisors need to be aware of the principles of adult learning (Zepeda 2006).

Adult learners are motivated by success, volition, value, and enjoyment (Knowles et al. 2005). For adults, relevancy adds value to learning, and intrinsic motivation based on success, value, and enjoyment are significant motivating factors. Job-embedded learning can be achieved more readily if learning opportunities are efficient and yield mastery of skills and increases in knowledge that can be applied immediately to the work of teaching (Merriam et al. 2007; Zepeda 2000, 2002, 2007, 2008). Sparks and Hirsh (1997) wrote that

> Job-embedded learning… links learning to the immediate and real-life problems faced by teachers and administrators. It is based on the assumption that the most powerful learning is that which occurs in response to challenges currently being faced by the learner and that allows for immediate application, experimentation, and adaptation on the job. (p. 52)

There are three attributes of successful job-embedded learning: (a) it is relevant to the individual teacher, (b) feedback is built into the process, and (c) it facilitates the transfer of new skills into practice.

Extending Peer Coaching and Instructional Supervision Through the Portfolio

The use of the portfolio has emerged as a viable way for adults to chronicle more holistically their growth and development (St. Maurice and Shaw 2004; Tucker et al. 2002). The intents of the portfolio are to record growth and development, regardless of its use (e.g., preservice, part of an evaluation system, extension of professional development), and to capture learning through artifacts that are representative of practice. The intents of using the portfolio to extend classroom supervision, peer coaching, lesson study, and action research, for example, are grounded in the belief that people engage in more meaningful learning when they learn in the company of others and when they can concretely see the results of modifying their practices. The portfolio supports the ongoing study of the teaching process by the individual teacher, alone or with collegial or supervisory support and assistance.

Each cycle of the clinical supervision model and the peer coaching model has as its base line, the preobservation conference, the extended classroom observation, and the postobservation conference. It was the intent of the original clinical model for more than one complete cycle of supervision to occur throughout the year. By including portfolio development as part of the clinical model of supervision and peer coaching, learning can be extended.

Through overall goal setting, the teacher chooses an area to explore for the year, and under optimal conditions, all classroom observations are focused toward assisting the teacher to meet established goals. Artifact collection can become part of the data collection process used in the classroom observation. The analysis of artifacts can become part of the postobservation conference. In the next section of this chapter, a model of portfolio supervision that also can be applied to peer coaching is presented (Zepeda 2002).

> Portfolio development is both developmental and differentiated in nature. From a developmental approach, teachers begin at their current developmental level in the selection and reflective analysis of artifacts with the supervisor, peer coach, or mentor assuming either a direct or an indirect approach to working with teachers. This means that portfolio supervision can be either structured (direct) or more collaborative (indirect) between the teacher and supervisor (or colleague), or the process can be self-directed with the supervisor serving mainly as a facilitator.

A Model of Portfolio Supervision and Peer Coaching

Based on the research of Zepeda (2002) in an extended 2-year case study, a model of portfolio supervision evolved based on the practices of teachers in an elementary school. Again, this model can also be extended to peer coaching. Figure 41.2 illustrates the model and shows how portfolio development can become part of the clinical supervisory or peer coaching process.
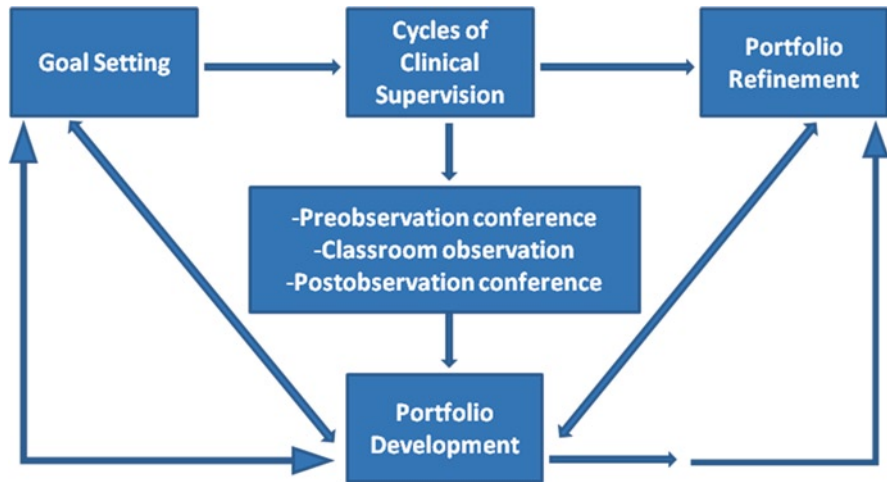
Fig. 41.2 Portfolio Supervisory Model. (Zepeda (2007). Used with permission)

In this model, all activities – goal setting, the focus of the observation, data collection, and artifact collection, selection, and analysis – are embedded in the preobservation conference, the extended classroom observation, and the postobservation conference. This model assumes that teachers and supervisors or peer coaches are familiar with certain skills – the skills in guiding a teacher through portfolio development are parallel (perhaps even identical) to those skills needed to conduct meaningful classroom observations and pre- and postobservation conferences.

Essential Skills: Reflection, Goal Setting, and Decision Making

For portfolio development to be a complementary practice in the process of clinical supervision or peer coaching, several skills must be built into the process and include:

- *Reflection* about portfolio development and design
- Self-analysis
- *Decision making* (the process of making decisions about what to include in the portfolio)

Figure 41.3 portrays the reciprocal nature of skill application when the portfolio is used as a complement to clinical supervision and peer coaching. Each one of these skills works in tandem as teachers explore their practices while constructing knowledge from examining and reexamining the artifacts included in the portfolio.
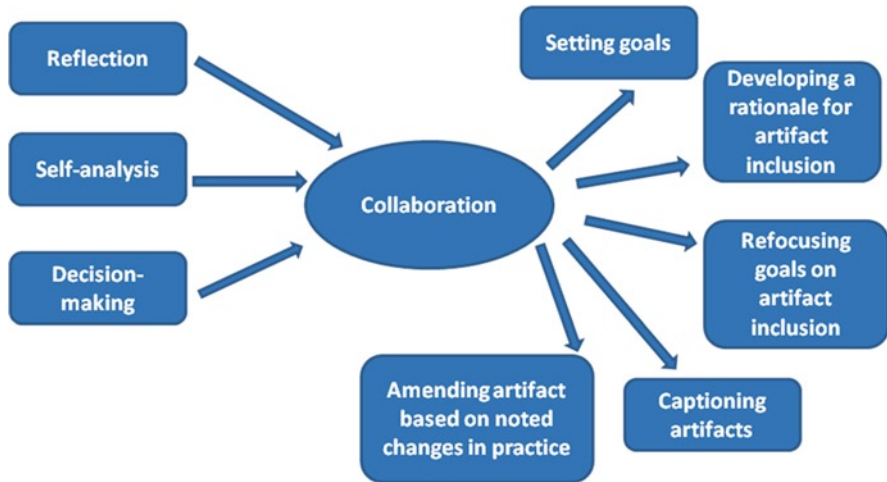
Fig. 41.3 Skills Inherent in Portfolio Supervision. (Zepeda (2007). Used with permission)

As a way to catalog professional learning, growth, and development, the portfolio can be used to enhance instructional supervision, peer coaching, and teacher professional development. Artifacts, preserved in a portfolio, assist teachers in reflecting on their practices that may result in improvement and growth. Teacher's learning may be extended if the portfolio was used as part of the clinical model of supervision and peer coaching. The portfolio supervisory model, described in this chapter, shows how portfolio development and its integral components (e.g., goal setting, the focus of the observation, data collection, and artifact collection, selection, and analysis) may be integrated into supervision cycle. Portfolios are useful during the postobservation conferences as well as for individual or collegial reflection on professional practice. To be effective, portfolio should be built on three essential skills: reflection, goal setting, and decision making.

Conclusion

The field of supervision needs to continue to examine ways in which teachers learn and develop from the very work they engage. No longer can school leaders continue to offer learning opportunities in black boxes in which one process is not connected to other processes. The coherence model serves as a framework to unify learning opportunities – to connect instructional supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development. There are many differentiated forms of supervision and professional development (e.g., peer coaching, action research, lesson study) that share many of the same processes – classroom observations – and skills such as reflection, inquiry, and dialog. Given the nature of schools and the myriad

contexts for learning, leadership for learning needs to include teachers, perhaps the most underutilized resource in the school, as equal partners in developing school-wide professional development that would serve as a complement to instructional supervision and teacher evaluation.

Supervision based on teacher leadership would look quite different, regardless of its form (e.g., peer coaching, action research, portfolio development) necessitating changes in school structures, namely the structures of power and authority. School leaders must differentiate supervision, evaluation, and professional development to meet the needs of all teachers. Equally important, leaders need to provide coherence to all efforts aimed at promoting teacher development.

Job-embedded learning is bedrock to promoting coherence because we know that teachers learn from their own practice and that teachers learn through their interactions with other teachers. Enlarging the base of leadership in schools, teachers can and will take ownership in their learning. To be effective in their classrooms and to promote teacher learning and leading, school leaders need to create supportive school cultures and embrace an ethos for learning.

In schools that embrace teacher learning and leading, a culture of collaboration and collegiality is championed, teachers are engaged in making decisions about their own learning, and they engage in learning that is job embedded. To support job-embedded learning, time and resources need to be expended on instructional supervision and professional development. Given the rapidly changing conditions found in schools, teachers need to be supported by being provided the opportunity to work together in teams. Such practices would support collaboration between teachers of all subjects, grade levels, and experience levels.

Leaders and teachers will need to work alongside one another to build processes in supervision, professional development, and evaluation that are differentiated and developmental to meet the needs of the teachers and the systems in which they work. There are no magical formulas to guide this work. The process of developing an environment conducive to adult learning and leading starts with teachers and leaders standing as equal partners.

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Chapter 42
School Leadership for Adult Development: The Dramatic Difference It Can Make

Ellie Drago-Severson

A New Approach for New Demands: Adaptive Versus Technical Challenges

Today's educational challenges place new, multifaceted demands on leaders who dedicate themselves to educating children and youth (Bogotch 2002a, b; Childress et al. 2007; Elmore 2004; Kegan and Lahey 2009; Richardson 2008; Wagner 2007). This calls for changes in how we work and learn together – and it calls for more effective ways to support adult growth and development. It is clear that supporting student learning and growth is the common core of our efforts and ambitions. Yet, school leaders also share with the palpable need to understand the qualitatively different ways adults learn in order to build capacity and make schools true learning centers for all who learn and grow there – children, youth *and* adults. John, a recent participant in one of my workshops, characteristically explained:

> I have a master's degree in educational administration and have taken many courses and workshops on different aspects of leadership and administration since earning my degree. None of my coursework has focused on understanding how adults learn. Without this workshop, I wouldn't have even realized how much I needed to learn – as a principal, I *need* more knowledge about how I can support adult learning and growth. – John Quattrochi, Principal, Public Middle School, March 2008

Even an experienced leader like John, who served as a principal in New York City for more than 20 years, is looking for different and fresh approaches to meeting the needs of education in the twenty-first century. As the world becomes more complex, the challenges we face require more than the approach we've had in hand – what leadership scholar Ronald Heifetz (1994) called a "technical fix." Technical problems are those for which we have both the problem and solutions clearly defined. Even if we do not have the tools and training to solve the problem

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ourselves, we know exactly what is wrong – and someone, somewhere, knows what to do to fix it. With regard to the challenges we encounter in education today, however, we have not been here before. We are facing something new, something evolving, something undefined. We are facing profound *adaptive challenges.*

By *adaptive challenges*, Heifetz (1994) means situations and problems for which neither a problem nor a solution is known or has been identified. This kind of problem requires new approaches and is solved as we are "in the act of working on it" (Wagner et al. 2006, p. 10). In other words, what is needed is the capacity to be able to live and learn our way through the ambiguity and complexity that these kinds of challenges create. When I say capacity, I mean developmental capacity. These kinds of adaptive challenges require us, as adults, to be able to manage complexity and ambiguity. Research has shown that most adults need to grow and develop in order to be able to manage adaptive challenges effectively.

So What Is Adult Development and Why Is It Important?

I define adult development or growth as increases in our cognitive, affective or emotional, and interpersonal *capacities* that enable us to better manage the complexity of work, leadership and life. Supporting adult development is critical in today's world since it can help us to better manage the complex adaptive challenges we face as educators. We also know that there is a direct link between supporting adult learning and enhanced student achievement (Donaldson 2008; DuFour 2007; Guskey 1999; Moller and Pankake 2006; Wagner 2007). Indeed, as educators committed to supporting student learning and achievement, organizational change and adult learning, we must understand that change begins with us. As developmental psychologist and theorist Kegan (2002) explained, "The most powerful driver for behavioral change is a change in how one understands the world. If you want powerful ongoing changes in teaching or leadership, you have to get at the underlying beliefs and conceptions that give rise to behaviors" (as cited in Sparks 2002, p. 70). Ultimately, adult development is all about perspective taking – growing our capacities to take bigger and different perspectives on others, systems, the world and ourselves – and a perspective that allows us to care for the children, adults and ourselves can make all the difference in our schools and our leadership.

In this chapter, I present my *learning-oriented* model of school leadership. My model, which includes *four pillar practices for growth* – teaming, providing leadership roles, collegial inquiry and mentoring – offers a helpful map that shows how we can shape schools and school systems as collaborative learning centers in which we can better support our own and each others' growth. This learning-oriented model draws from a 4.5-year ethnography which examined how one principal, Dr. Sarah Levine, exercised leadership on behalf of teacher development in her school; a later study of how 25 principals from across the United States discussed how they worked to support and encourage teachers to collaboratively support their own and others' learning *within their schools*; and my ongoing work with principals, assis-

tant principals, teachers and superintendents in workshops and classes in which I teach this model and the theories that undergird it. The research on which this chapter is based offers a promising path toward building schools as learning centers, helping educators work through adaptive challenges while simultaneously building developmental leadership capacity.

Investigative Opportunity

As I have explained, intentionally caring for adult development can make all the difference. Before discussing the core principles of my new learning-oriented model of school leadership, however, I invite you to engage in an investigative opportunity. In Table 42.1, I present excerpts from a teacher, Mel, who responded to the questions: *How is your principal helpful to you in your work? How is she unhelpful*? The idea here is to note anything that stands out to you about this teacher's experience of his or her principal. In other words, please let the following question guide you in your reading: What do you notice about this teacher's experiences of his principal? Please keep in mind that the word "principal" could be replaced with supervisor, headteacher, team leader, assistant principal or superintendent.

Table 42.1 An investigative opportunity: vignette

Below is one response to the questions: How is your principal helpful to you in your work? How is she unhelpful?
Mel How is your principal helpful to you in your work? How is she unhelpful?
Her feedback is what helps me most. Whether it's on goals that we discuss or my teaching, it is really helpful. Her comments make me feel like I'm doing a good job. And, when she offers suggestions for improving, I know that she is offering them because she really cares about me – not just as a teacher, but as a person. That makes a huge difference. It makes me want to do more for her and to be an even better teacher. I want to be a better teacher and I know my principal can help me become better. It's important to me to keep learning and to be a lifelong learner; my principal knows that. Sometimes, when I answer a question during a faculty meeting, she tells me that I didn't get the whole thing correct, but she always has something good to say about what I said. She makes me feel like I got part of it, like I am contributing – even if I didn't get it all. She makes me feel like at least I'm learning something about the new curriculum. And she is very patient with me. When she encourages me during an observation or after a faculty meeting, it makes me feel like I really belong here. If she didn't do that, I think I'd feel like, "What am I doing here? Maybe I should just quit." She works really hard at helping us to have a sense of our school as a real community – a place where we are making a difference. It's hard being a teacher. Sometimes, when she tells me that I didn't do something quite right in my teaching, I feel so badly. I don't like to disappoint her. When she says something like this, she also lets me know that she knows that I'm really trying and that makes me feel better. A lot of times at school, she'll say, "Mel, what do you think about this or that?" It's really not helpful to me when she does this after I've asked her a question about something that I don't understand. I'm not sure how I'm suppose to learn new practices if she doesn't tell me what I should know. I ask her a question because I don't know what I think. (see Drago-Severson 2009)

As the vignette in Table 42.1 shows, we need to differentiate the kinds of leadership we provide to support adults' growth according to the different needs of the adults with whom we are working, just as we do for young learners. My work shows that professionals will experience the same curriculum, learning opportunity or developmental initiative differently and that it is necessary to modify our approach accordingly. Traditionally in education, two kinds of capacity have been essential for improving student achievement: *school or organizational capacity* – the school's collective ability as a functioning, working whole to increase achievement (Newmann et al. 2000; Spillane and Louis 2002) – and *instructional capacity* – teachers' ability to provide effective instruction (Cohen and Ball 1999; Hoerr 2008). But a third kind of capacity is also needed (Hargreaves 2007a, b; Elmore 2000, 2004), and this chapter addresses it: *developmental capacity*, for the new mental demands placed on educators often exceed our developmental capacities (Kegan 1994; Kegan and Lahey 2009). Moreover, working toward these new kinds of capacities accords with the general call for a different, interdependent type of staff development that links the learning of teachers, principals and superintendents to the learning of students in our schools (Fullan 2005, 2007; Hargreaves 2007a, b; Hord 2007).

Constructive-Developmental Theory

Adult development and learning theories can be powerful tools for understanding how to support adult development in K-12 schools, but they are underutilized (Cranton 1996; Drago-Severson 2004a, b; Hammerman 1999; Kegan and Lahey 2009; Levine 1989). Robert Kegan's (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory informs the learning-oriented model presented in this chapter, as the theory helps us understand how differences in our behaviors, feelings and thinking are often related to differences in how we *construct*, or make meaning of, our experience. It also helps to explain why even as adults, we have different developmental capacities and different needs for growth. Understanding the key principles of this theory provides us with a *language* we can use to discuss adult development. Importantly, it also helps us to understand that growth is possible in adulthood. In fact, adulthood can be a period of significant development if a person is provided with appropriate supports and challenges.

While other leadership learning theories (e.g., Ackerman and Mackenzie 2007; Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski 2002; Boyatzis and McKee 2005; Brookfield 1987, 1995; Daloz 1986, 1999; Donaldson 2006, 2008; MacBeath 2006; MacBeath et al. 2007; Mezirow and Associates 2000; Moller and Pankake 2006; Osterman and Kottkamp 1993, 2004; Sergiovanni 1995, 2000; Taylor et al. 2000; Wagner et al. 2006; York-Barr et al. 2006) inform my learning-oriented model of leadership and the pillar practices that compose it, Kegan's (1982, 1994, 2000) constructive-developmental theory is central since it illuminates the ways in which we make sense of our experiences and helps us understand *how to support* adults' development in very direct and multifaceted ways.

Informational Learning Versus Transformational Learning

Before explaining the central ideas of constructive-developmental theory, I want to make a very important distinction between two kinds of learning: informational learning and transformational learning. *Informational learning*, often the goal of traditional forms of professional development, focuses on increasing the amount of knowledge and skills a person possesses. Some people think about this as encyclopedia kinds of knowledge. Informational learning – or increases in *what* we know – brings about changes in our knowledge, skills, attitudes and even our competencies (e.g., using technology or understanding how to analyze data to assess student achievement). While informational learning is needed and has a vital purpose in the twenty-first century, we need to experience a different kind of learning in order to manage the complex challenges in our schools and build leadership capacity.

Transformational learning, on the other hand, is related to increases in a person's cognitive, emotional, interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities that enable him or her to better manage the complexities of leading, teaching, learning and life. With transformational learning, or growth (I use these terms interchangeably), a qualitative shift occurs in *how a person actively interprets, understands and makes sense of experience.* It is associated with an increase in individual developmental capacities, which enables a person to take a broader perspective on herself, others and the relationships between self and others (Kegan 1982, 1994, 2000; Kegan and Lahey 2009; Mezirow 1991, 2000).

Although both types of learning are important and necessary, we need opportunities to develop our internal capacities if we are to meet the complex adaptive challenges of twenty-first century schooling. Although some supports can be provided externally, others must come through a practice of leadership and the kind of learning that transforms one's perspective. We need to help each other to grow, and no one can do this alone. This kind of focus is at the heart of Kegan's theory, which informs my learning-oriented model of leadership.

Constructive-Developmental Theory: Origins and Three Foundational Principles

> Constructive-developmental theory is powerful to me because it not only offers insight [into] why different individuals respond differently in similar situations but also it helps explain how my own leadership changed and developed over time. (Principal, Charter School, May 2006)

Constructive-developmental theory is a Neo-Piagetian theory that stems from 40 years of research (Basseches 1984; Baxter-Magolda 1992, 2009; Belenky et al. 1986; Gilligan 1982; Kegan 1982, 1994, 2000; King and Kitchener 1994; Knefelkamp and David-Lang 2000; Kohlberg 1969, 1984; Perry 1970; Piaget 1952). More specifically, Kegan's theory applies many of Jean Piaget's ideas to the

development of adults (e.g., a person needs both supports and challenges in order to grow); however, his theory includes additional lines of development – emotional, interpersonal and intrapersonal. Moreover, Kegan sees development as a dynamic, lifelong, interactive process between the person and the environment.

Although constructive-developmental theory can be a powerful tool for understanding how to support adult growth in K-12 professional development programs (Cranton 1996; Drago-Severson 2004a, b, 2007, 2009; Drago-Severson et al. 2001a, b; Kegan 2000; Levine 1989; Mezirow 2000), it is only beginning to be applied in schools. This theory helps us to attend to developmental diversity in addition to the other forms of diversity that educators strive to address (e.g., race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, sexuality). Kegan's theory is based on three central ideas:

1. *Constructivism*: We actively *construct* and make meaning of our experiences with respect to cognitive, emotional, intrapersonal and interpersonal lines of development.
2. *Developmentalism*: The ways in which we construct reality can develop throughout the life span, provided that we benefit from developmentally appropriate supports and challenges.
3. *Subject–object balance*: This balance centers on the relationship between what we can take a perspective on and be responsible for (hold out and look at as "object") and what we are embedded in and cannot see or be responsible for (are "subject to"). What we are "subject" to "runs" our self-system. We cannot consider it.

Understanding these three central principles sheds light on the developmental principles in what I call an individual's way of knowing.

Ways of Knowing

A person's way of knowing is the lens through which all experience is filtered; it enables an individual to interpret life actively, as it dictates how learning and all life experiences will be taken in, managed and understood. The *instrumental, socializing and self-authoring* ways of knowing are most common in adulthood.

Typically, a person's way of knowing is stable and consistent for a period of time and reflects a coherent system of logic. In other words, people generally tend to engage the same way of knowing within different roles and across different contexts since our natural tendency as human beings is to strive to make the self-cohere. However, under rare conditions (e.g., psychological or physical abuse) development can be uneven and a person can make meaning with a different way of knowing in one domain of life. Second, each way of knowing incorporates the former into its new, more complex meaning-making system. As we grow, we gradually develop the ability to demonstrate capacities associated with the next way of knowing. Third, although this theory, like other stage theories, is ostensibly

hierarchical, one way of knowing is not necessarily better than another, unless the implicit and explicit demands of the environment, including our work-related responsibilities, call for higher-level capacities. I think it's helpful to consider this in terms of the *goodness of fit*, or the match between our way of knowing and the challenges we face and expectations place on us in our work and personal life. Fourth, McCallum (2008), like others (Knefelkamp and David-Lang's 2000), found that under periods of extreme stress, some adults tend to "fall back," or temporarily demonstrate less complex ways of knowing. This kind of temporary falling back is also noted in the work.

Last, it is essential to note that certain kinds of positions – including leadership posts – do require the ability to demonstrate more complex developmental capacities. For example, leaders must be able to understand other adults' points of view while simultaneously holding onto their own perspectives (Kegan and Lahey 2009). The hopefulness of this theory and the learning-oriented model I present next is that these can help us to better understand our own and other people's developmental strengths and limitations – or vulnerabilities – and can help us to support adult growth. In addition to facilitating growth, these ideas also help us to move away from labeling people on the basis of behaviors alone (Levine 1989). This perspective offers a lens through which we can better understand adults' attitudes, behaviors and expectations and how to support growth in individuals with different ways of knowing.

The Instrumental Way of Knowing: "Rule-Bound Self"

As Table 42.2 indicates, an adult who makes meaning with an instrumental way of knowing has what I refer to as a "rule-bound self." They oriented toward learning the "rules," since the "rules" help them to understand how to perform tasks as a teacher or leader, solve complex problems with students, and engage in dialog with team members. Instrumental knowers have dualistic thinking; they believe there are "right" and "wrong" answers, and "right" ways to think and act.

This adult has a very concrete orientation to the world, and has a "what do you have that can help me/what do I have that can help you?" perspective and orientation to teaching, learning, leadership and life. A strength of this way of knowing is that a person understands that visible events, processes and situations have a reality separate from his own point of view, although he understands the world in concrete terms (Drago-Severson 2004b, 2006, 2007). Although instrumental knowers have the developmental capacity to take perspective on and control their impulses, they do not have this same perspective on their needs, desires and interests. They are defined by – or "run by" – fulfilling their own needs, wishes and desires. Other people are considered as either helpers or obstacles to having one's own needs and desires met. A limitation to this way of knowing is that a person cannot yet take another's perspective fully. In other words, while these adults understand that other people have feelings and preferences, they do not yet have the developmental

Table 42.2 Ways of knowing according to Kegan's constructive-developmental theory

Stage→	Stage 0	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Kegan's (1982) Terms / Way of Knowing→	Incorporative	Impulsive	Imperial / Instrumental	Interpersonal / Socializing	Institutional / Self-authoring	Interindividual / Self-transforming
Orientation of self / Underlying thought structure			Rule-based self	Other-focused self	Reflective self	Interconnecting self
Subject (S): What a person is identified with	S: Reflexes (sensing, moving)	S: Impulses, perceptions	S: Needs, interests, wishes	S: The interpersonal, mutuality	S: Authorship, identity, psychic administration, ideology	S: Interindividuality, interpenetrability of self-systems
Object (O): What a person can reflect on and take perspective on	O: None	O: Reflexes (sensing, moving)	O: Impulses, perceptions	O: Needs, interests, wishes	O: The interpersonal, mutuality	O: Authorship, identity, psychic administration, ideology
Definition of self			Orients to self-interests, purposes and concrete needs.	Orients to valued others' (external authorities) expectations, values and opinions.	Orients to self's values (internal authority).	Orients to multiple self-systems; open to learning from other people.

Orienting concerns	Depends on rules and the "right" way to do things. Is concerned with concrete consequences. Decisions are based on what the self will acquire. Others are experienced as help or obstacles to meeting concrete needs. Person does not yet have the capacity for abstract thinking or generalizing.	Depends on external authority, acceptance, and affiliation. Self is defined by others' important judgments. Is oriented to inner states. Self feels responsible for others' feelings and holds others responsible for own feelings. Criticism and conflict threaten the self.	Self generates and replies to internal values and standards. Criticism is evaluated according to internal standards. Ultimate concern is with one's own competence and performance. Self can balance contradictory feelings. Conflict is viewed as natural and enhances one's own and others' perspectives to achieve larger organizational goals.	Is committed to self-exploration. Engaging with conflict is an opportunity to let others inform and shape thinking. Conflict is viewed as natural to life and enhances thinking. Is able to understand and manage tremendous complexity. Is substantively less invested in own identity and more open to others' perspectives. Constantly judges and questions how self-system works
Guiding questions for self	"Will I get punished?" "What's in it for me?"	"Will you (valued other/authority) still like/value me?" "Will you (valued other/authority) approve of me?" "Will you (valued other/authority) still think I am a good person?"	"Am I maintaining my own personal integrity, standards and values?" "Am I competent?" "Am I living, working and loving to the best of my ability?" "Am I achieving my goals and being guided by my ideals?"	"How can other people's thinking help me to enhance my own?" "How can I seek out information and opinions from others to help me modify my own ways of understanding?"

capacity to accommodate their perspectives to the perspectives of another person. In addition, they are not yet able to think abstractly or make generalizations from one context to another.

Their experiences are organized by the following concrete qualities:

- Attributes, events and sequences (I am good at my work)
- Observable actions and behaviors (Good leaders follow rules, work hard, lead in the "right" way and get the "right" answers.)
- One's own point of view, interests, needs and preferences (If I do this in my classroom, I will have a better chance of getting merit pay or a promotion.)

While instrumental knowers orient primarily toward achieving their own concrete goals and satisfying their own interests, they are not self-absorbed and can be as kind-hearted as anyone else. Instrumental knowers, however, will feel reassured by supervisors if they offer more tangible expressions of support, such as explicit suggestions and concrete explanations. Providing these adults with opportunities to learn about and consider multiple perspectives will help them to broaden their perspectives over time.

The Socializing Way of Knowing: "Other-Focused Self"

An adult who makes meaning primarily with a socializing way of knowing has an enhanced capacity for reflection. In fact, socializing knowers have developed the capacity to think abstractly (to think about thinking), to make generalizations from one context to another, and to reflect on their own and other people's actions. They have the developmental capacity to identify with and internalize other people's feelings. As Table 42.3 shows, an adult with this way of knowing might ask herself, "What does my assistant principal think I should do? Will my teammates still like me if I disagree with them?" A socializing knower is able to subordinate her own needs and desires (they are held as "object") to the needs and desires of others. However, she is not yet able to have a perspective on her relationships. Others' approval and acceptance is of utmost importance since a socializing knower's reality is co-constructed. A valued authority's expectations and judgments, for example, become one's *own* expectations and judgments. In other words, if you as my principal think I am doing good work, then I think the very same about myself. Valued others, authorities (e.g., a spouse or principal) and often societal expectations or ideas (e.g., religious or political ideologies), are understood and experienced not simply as resources to be used by the self (as they are for instrumental knowers), but rather as the origin of internal confirmation or authority (Drago-Severson 2004b, 2006). Interpersonal conflict with valued others is experienced as a threat to the self; thus socializing knowers avoid conflict because it is a risk to the relationship and is experienced as a threat to the fabric of a person's very self. As Kegan (1982) put it, "You are the other by whom I complete myself, the other whom I need to create the context out of which I define and know myself and the world" (p. 100). In other words, these adults do not have the developmental capacity

Table 42.3 Collegial inquiry: a developmental view

Pillar practice	For instrumental knowers	For socializing knowers	For self-authoring knowers
Collegial inquiry	Supports: Share concrete examples of practice; provide detailed instructions, advice, skills and information; establish steps to engaging in dialog; establish some concrete goals and rationale for needs; ensure colleagues are experienced as resources. Challenges: Encourage dialog and exploration of multiple perspectives; create opportunities for generalization and transferability of broad, abstract ideas; encourage engaging in situations and problem-solving requiring abstract thinking; provide opportunities to consider self through another's point of view.	Supports: Establish group norms; provide opportunities to voice and explore perspectives in pairs or small groups before sharing with larger groups or supervisors; provide opportunities to meet the expectations of valued others; ensure acceptance of colleagues to support risk-taking. Challenges: Encourage the toleration of conflict and the development of individual beliefs and values; support voicing of one's own perspective as expert and leader, regardless of judgment and approval of others.	Supports: Establish opportunities for demonstrating expertise and competencies and for critiquing proposals, designs and initiatives; create spaces for dialog, engaging in conflict and sharing perspectives; emphasize becoming more competent and extending own options to achieve self-determined goals. Challenges: Emphasize the importance of tolerance and openness during debate; encourage sincere consideration of opposing viewpoints; challenge knower to question own belief system.

to consider that point of view (e.g., a valued other's or authorities') from a distance and evaluate it.

Encouraging these adults to look inwardly and to express their own perspectives, rather than adopting authorities' solutions and perspectives, will support their growth over time.

The Self-Authoring Way of Knowing: "Reflective Self"

Adults with a predominantly self-authoring way of knowing have grown to be able to take perspective on their interpersonal context and society's expectations. In other words, they are no longer "run by" these; instead, they can look at them,

evaluate them, prioritize them and reflect on different perspectives and relationships. I refer to self-authoring knowers as having a "reflective self" because they have grown from being made up by and "run by" their relationships to being able to regulate them. Kegan (1982) discusses this as a shift from "'I am my relationships' to 'I have relationships'" (p. 100).

Self-authoring knowers have developed the capacity to control their feelings and emotions; they can discuss their internal states as well as hold opposing feelings simultaneously and not be threatened or torn apart by them. Self-authoring knowers have the capacity to generate their own value system and personal philosophy, and they take responsibility for and ownership of their own internal authority. They are able to identify (and are identified *with*) abstract values, principles and longer-term purposes and can prioritize and integrate competing values. Self-authoring knowers can assess other people's expectations and demands according to their own internal standards and judgment. He or she has the capacity to reflect on his interpersonal relationships, but is limited by an inability to take perspective on his own autonomy or self-system, which manages relationships, because it is embedded in his own assertions, theories and standards.

Self-authoring knowers have self-regulating capacities, including the capacity to reflect on their multiple roles as leaders, teachers, learners and citizens. They construct theories about their relationships and have an understanding of how the past, present and future relate to each other. Demonstrating competency, achieving goals, and living and working to one's fullest potential are of uppermost concern.

A limitation, or area for growth, for self-authoring knowers is that they identify with or are made up by their own ideologies, assertions and theories. In other words, a self-authoring knower cannot take perspective on her own self-system because it is embedded in her own ideals and principles. It is challenging for these adults to critique their own self-system and beliefs. This is their "growing edge" for growth, as I refer to it. To support their growth, one could offer ideas for consideration that do not coincide with their own, and encourage them not to dismiss them without consideration. Helping these adults to become less invested in their own perspectives and more open to opposing views will support their growth over time.

Learning-Oriented Leadership: A Developmental Approach to Professional Development

Familiarity with constructive-developmental theory helps us understand the potential and promise of my learning-oriented model and of the pillar-practices-for growth that compose it. It also shows how a "holding environment" (Kegan 1982) – or the context in and out of which a person grows – can be created within these practices to facilitate adults' transformational learning, or growth, which signifies a change in their capacities to handle the complexities of their work and lives (Drago-Severson 2004a, b, 2009). Put simply, a good holding environment can be a relationship, a series of relationships, an organization, or a group. Similar to the conditions we

provide to facilitate a child's growth, holding environments offer developmentally appropriate supports and challenges to adults who make sense of their experiences in very different ways.

Holding environments serves three important functions. First, it needs to "hold well"; this means recognizing and confirming who a person is by meeting a person where he or she is, without an urgent need or push for change. Second, and only when a person is ready, a holding environment needs to "let go" and provide challenge or stretching, enabling the person to grow beyond their current way of organizing reality to a new, more complex way of knowing. Finally, a robust holding environment needs to remain in place and provide continuity and stability to the person as he re-emerges so that relationships can be re-known and recreated in a way that supports who the person has grown to become (Drago-Severson 2004a, b, 2006, 2007, 2009; Drago-Severson et al. 2001a; Kegan 1982, 1994). Notably, the most effective holding environments provide individuals with high support *and* high challenge in order to support growth. Any one of the pillar practices-for-growth described below can serve as a "holding environment" for adults who make meaning with different ways of knowing (Drago-Severson 2004b, 2006, 2009).

Four Pillar Practices for Adult Growth

School leaders – teachers, principals, assistant principals and superintendents – who participated in my research employed four practices to support transformational learning or growth. I refer to these as pillar practices for two reasons. First, they serve as foundation for supporting adults' development. Second, they serve as the bedrock for what I refer to as a new *learning-oriented model of leadership* that was derived and refined from my research over the past twenty years. The pillar practices – teaming, providing other adults with leadership roles, collegial inquiry and mentoring – can be employed to support adults with different ways of knowing, as each practice pivots on creating opportunities for adults to collaborate and engage in dialog and reflection as tools for professional and personal growth.

While readers are undoubtedly familiar with aspects of the four pillar practices, my intention is to *reframe* these practices and demonstrate how they can be employed as robust developmental strategies – or holding environments – that can support the growth and learning of adults with diverse ways of knowing. Below, I will introduce one of the four pillar practices (for a full discussion of all four practices, please refer Drago-Severson 2009) as *distinct yet mutually reinforcing* practices that can be applied in schools and school systems to support adult development *and* to strengthen collaborative learning centers in which adults, regardless of their position, can support adult growth. In so doing, I focus on why these pillars can support adult development and highlight the importance of how adults with different ways of knowing will experience them – as well as the kinds of supports and challenges that will enable adults with different ways of knowing to grow from engaging in these practices, over time. Of the four, I have chosen collegial inquiry for this chapter.

Collegial Inquiry

Collegial inquiry is a developmental example of a larger concept known as reflective practice, which can occur individually or in groups. I define *collegial inquiry* as a shared dialog that purposefully involves reflecting on one's assumptions, values, commitments and convictions with others as part of the learning process (Drago-Severson 2004b, 2009). In other words, while we can engage in reflective practice independently – and often without the help of others, we need at least one partner to engage in collegial inquiry. Collegial inquiry, like teaming, also creates a context in which adults can reflect on proposals for change, new initiatives and schoolwide issues (e.g., developing an integrated curriculum), as well as build individual, schoolwide and systemwide capacity. Creating contexts in which adults talk regularly about their practice – and their values, beliefs and guiding philosophies – in the context of supportive relationships with colleagues encourages self-analysis and can improve the individual's and the school's practice.

Indeed, practitioners and scholars generally agree that professional learning opportunities for teachers, principals, assistant principals and superintendents should center on reflective practice (Ackerman and Mackenzie 2007; Byrne-Jiménez and Orr 2007; Donaldson 2006, 2008; Teitel 2006, York-Barr et al. 2006). These educators and researchers believe that adults who engage in reflective practice will improve their instructional and leadership practices and, in turn, enhance student learning and achievement (Ackerman and Mackenzie 2007; Ball and Cohen 1999; Cochran-Smith 2006; Darling-Hammond 2003; Donaldson 2008; Elmore 2000; Elmore and Burney 1999; Fullan 2005; Hawley and Valli 1999; Johnson et al. 2004; Mizell 2006). Yet, I contend that we can more effectively shape positive school communities if we engage in *collaborative* reflective practice, or collegial inquiry.

When we engage in collegial inquiry, we have the opportunity to share and consider our own perspectives, to be exposed to and learn from other people's perspectives, to understand our own and other people's assumptions and how they guide our thinking and influence our behaviors and our practice, and to offer support and challenges as well as to benefit from those others who offer to help us grow. As we know, it is important to establish trust and a safe context in order to feel secure in sharing perspectives and to be willing to engage in risk taking.

We also know that the principal has one of the key roles in building a collaborative culture, in creating structures for reflective practice, and in securing resources needed to support teachers' ongoing and school-based engagement in reflective practice (Ackerman and Mackenzie 2007; Curry 2008; Donaldson 2006, 2008; Hirsch and Killion 2008; Leithwood and Hallinger 2003). Such structures include allocating time in the master schedule for collaborative meetings; including faculty and staff in a shared decision-making process; and engaging with faculty and staff as equal partners in these processes. Creating collaborative cultures wherein educators engage in reflecting on their practice is a promising and growth-enhancing way to encourage risk taking, share leadership, learn together and consequentially build individual and organizational capacity. It can also support transformational learning.

Moreover, engaging in collegial inquiry is both a developmental practice and a *process.* Over time, engaging in this practice and process creates a space for us to develop greater awareness of our beliefs, convictions, values and assumptions; to reflect with others in ways that may allow us to envision and perhaps test the validity of our assumptions about leadership, teaching and practice; and to entertain and test alternative ways of thinking, acting or behaving. When school leaders – principals, assistant principals, teachers and superintendents – engage in collegial inquiry, a space is created for growth; the process and context of engaging in this practice becomes a holding environment.

However, as you know, adults will experience the practice and process of collegial inquiry differently, depending on their ways of knowing. Table 42.3 shows how adults with different ways of knowing tend to make sense of their experiences of engaging in this practice and process. It shows what constitutes developmentally appropriate supports and challenges so that adults will be *both* well held (or supported) and appropriately challenged – or stretched in a developmental sense – to support growth.

For example, giving and receiving constructive and honest feedback is an essential part of collegial inquiry. Educators with an *instrumental way* of knowing, however, will tend to experience a valued colleague's or a supervisor's feedback on his teaching and/or leadership practices as an indication or whether they are either doing things the *right* or *wrong* way. Adults with a *socializing way* of knowing will tend to understand valued colleagues and supervisor's feedback as expert advice – advice they should know about in order to do good work, as colleagues' expectations for and judgments of their practice become their own expectations. Adults with a *self-authoring way* of knowing, on the other hand, generate their own expectations for their leadership, teaching and practice in general. They have grown to have the developmental capacity to weigh their colleagues' and supervisors' feedback and then look to their own internal authority – and bench of judgment – to determine the value of the feedback and to decide whether or not to implement others' suggestions. As this one example shows, sensitivity to developmental diversity when structuring, supporting and engaging in collegial inquiry is essential for safe and productive implementation of this pillar practice.

Revisiting Our Investigative Opportunity

Since we know that what constitutes a safe and productive learning context will likely differ depending on a person's way of knowing, it can be helpful to invite adults to engage in dialog aimed at sharing their thinking about what constitutes a safe learning space before beginning their collaborative work in any of the four pillar practices. Prioritizing time and making room for this kind of opening conversation holds the potential to increase adults' willingness to take risks in sharing their perspectives about issues under discussion and enhance collaboration.

In light of these and other considerations outlined above, it might be helpful to revisit the vignette presented in Table 42.1. This is an opportunity to apply your new

learnings about constructive-developmental theory and the pillar practices. Please consider marking data (words, phrases) from Mel's vignette that help you to understand his developmental orientation and experience of the principals. The following questions are offered to guide you in your reading: (1) With what way of knowing does he seem to be making meaning? (2) What do you think of his principal? (3) If you were the leader, what kinds of supports and challenges might you offer Mel to help him grow? (4) How might collegial inquiry help support his growth?

Implications

> I *totally* agree that it's important to support teachers. I understand why it's important to help teachers learn and grow. I know that when teachers feel satisfied and happy in their work, it makes a big difference in terms of how I feel in the classroom. It's not just that. It affects me and my learning. (Julie, High School Senior, Tasmania Australia, August 2005)

Around the world, the need to support adult growth is palpable. Although it is very important that we support adult growth and development for its own reasons, it is also important because it will enhance conditions for student learning. To meet the complex, adaptive demands of leading and teaching in the twenty-first century, we must build schools to be learning centers – that is, growth-enhancing mentoring communities – places where both adults and children are nurtured to grow. Moreover, while some supports can be provided externally, many must come from within the school and school system through the practice of leadership and the work we do together as we support each other's growth.

Accordingly, I offer some practical, research-generated applications for implementing this learning-oriented model in diverse school contexts. The four pillar practices, which are informed by developmental theory, are really a new way of thinking about schools as learning centers, and they can be implemented within our current structures. They can help us in our continual search for improvement and support growth in the ecology of the school and system. Yet, how do school leaders use these practices to create conditions in schools that create a fertile soil for fostering adult growth and human capacity building?

In my work with educators and school leaders, they have shared with me many promising strategies for implementing the pillar practices, which – taken together, and alongside the developmental considerations outlined above – are mutually reinforcing. They are complementary yet distinctive elements which I offer up for your consideration in Table 42.4, in case they are helpful.

Ultimately, our collective goal is to help educators work through adaptive challenges, while simultaneously building leadership and human capacity. Opening up this potential will strengthen teaching and leadership and, in turn, improve student performance. As school leaders committed to supporting student learning, achievement, organizational change and adult learning, we must first recognize that authentic change starts with *us* and understand the promise in supporting each

Table 42.4 Practical Applications and Supports for Implementing the Pillar Practices

Pillar practice	For teachers and/or administrators
Teaming	Promising applications: Team teaching; study groups; research groups; book clubs; departmental/grade-level teaming; data analysis groups
	Prerequisite supports: Allocating time and resources; modeling; using protocols; establishing ground rules and norms; attending to developmental diversity
Providing leadership roles	Promising applications: Delivering presentations (in and out of the school context); leading faculty meetings and/or professional development workshops; leading teams; managing projects; developing curriculum; informally sharing expertise; leading peer reviews; mentoring/modeling for new teachers/student interns; researching, adapting and implementing models; coordinating technology; lead teacher; instructional coach
	Prerequisite supports: Inviting a variety of interested teachers/administrators to assume roles; considering the intentionality behind the role; attending to developmental diversity
Collegial inquiry	Promising applications: Study groups; staff retreats; case writing, free-writing, proposal writing and/or journaling; self-evaluations; dialog in teams or faculty meetings; quality review processes; small group work; conflict resolution; shared decision making; reflective communities with peers; learning walks
	Prerequisite supports: Providing structures for dialog and reflection; allocating time and resources; modeling; establishing ground rules and norms of confidentiality; attending to developmental diversity
Mentoring	Promising applications: Mentoring for new teachers/administrators; logistical, relational and comprehensive dialogic support; individual and team applications
	Prerequisite supports: Mentoring relationship as holding environment; mentor awareness of own way of knowing; transparency of needs and expectations regarding mentoring relationship; use of protocol; support and training for mentors; attending to developmental diversity

other's growth. After all, *all* educational leaders (i.e., superintendents who are called to support principals' growth and development, principals who are responsible for supporting assistant principals' and teachers' learning, assistant principals and teacher-leaders who need to support teachers and students) will benefit by engaging in practices that support adult growth and learning. By participating in these practices, we can model shared inquiry, an openness to learn from and respect for diverse perspectives, and a willingness to take risks and attend more effectively to adults' qualitatively different needs. Implementation of the model will enable all of us to share leadership, strengthen relationships, help each other manage change,

and support adult learning. It will also keep in our hearts focused on the following truths of contemporary leadership:

- A developmental perspective helps with understanding that adults will experience professional learning opportunities, leadership experiences, and engagement in the pillar practices in qualitatively *different* ways.
- A developmental vocabulary helps us to move away from labeling adults based on behaviors and move toward a deeper understanding of our differing developmental capacities and how to support each other's growth.
- Learning about and attending to supporting other people's *and* our own development can help us to enhance student achievement and build schools and school systems that are better equipped to meet the challenges of our world.
- Leadership in the twenty-first century is not a monolith. Leading for adult development requires a differentiated, developmentalized approach to professional learning and development – and employing the pillar practices is a robust way to support adult development and attend to individual differences and preferences.
- Adults and educators around the globe yearn for growth, yet change cannot be forced. Being mindful of the *developmental match* between our expectations and adults' capacities to meet them will help school leaders shape schools that are growth-enhancing communities that support adult development.

In closing, I remind you that there is great power in hope. It is my hope that this chapter amplifies our abilities to support growth and create school contexts where all participants – adults and children alike – are nurtured and well held, and that it encourages and strengthens us to step forward courageously in leading for adult development. May it help us be more compassionate by deepening our understanding of how adults grow and learn; may it enable us to listen differently and to lead by listening. This great potential is in our hands and hearts.

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Chapter 43
Leaders of Learning: Accomplished Teachers as Teacher Leaders

Margery McMahon

Introduction

In recent decades teacher leadership has gained currency in the discourse and practice of leadership in schools in the United Kingdom (UK), aligning with, and a product of, more distributive and less hierarchical understandings and approaches to leadership. This is manifest in schools in a variety of forms and in ways that are more democratic, consultative and participative.

The focus for this chapter is the new professional status and grades of teachers that have evolved in the United Kingdom in recent years. In outlining the development of these new models of accomplished teaching such as Advanced Skills Teachers (AST) and Excellent Teachers (ET) in England and Wales, and Chartered Teachers (CT) in Scotland and Wales, the chapter will explore the extent to which they represent new forms of teacher leadership, which may challenge more traditional structures and orthodoxies in schools and the ways in which they are or have the potential to be pedagogical leaders.

The chapter will outline how these models of accomplished teaching converge with and diverge from theoretical and applied models of teacher leadership and suggest that structural and ideological barriers in the education systems of the United Kingdom mean that these models of teacher leadership are not fully accommodated nor is their expertise fully capitalised on and utilised. In considering the work of accomplished teachers in curriculum innovation, developing pedagogy and supporting co-practitioners, the chapter will conclude by looking at the ways in which accomplished teaching extends and challenges existing understandings of teacher leadership.

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Models of Accomplished Teaching

The development of new forms of advanced certification for experienced teachers in the United Kingdom reflects efforts internationally to recognise, reward and in some cases, capitalise on the expertise of teachers (Kleinhenz and Ingvarson 2008; Forde et al. 2006). Currently in the United Kingdom, there are four models of advanced certification beyond initial qualification: AST and ET in England and Wales; CT in Scotland and Chartered London Teacher. A CT initiative was also piloted in Wales recently (see Egan 2009).

These models have developed in the United Kingdom since 1998 with the introduction of AST and the level of teacher engagement with them has grown, albeit slowly. Currently, there are 1,010 CT in Scotland, representing approximately 1.9% of the teaching workforce.[1] In England in January 2010, there were 4,090 ASTs (Department of Children, Families and Schools), 2010:15 from a teaching workforce of 448,000 (publically funded) (DCFS, 2010:10) representing fewer than 1%.[2]

The professional grade of AST and ET in England and the professional status of CT in Scotland provide recognition and reward for enhanced classroom practice and in the case of ASTs, utilises this to support development in practice and pedagogy for other teachers through the outreach dimension attached to the AST role.

A professional standard benchmarks the professional knowledge, skills and abilities related to each grade/status, and applicants demonstrate achievement of these to gain the professional recognition and reward attached to the status. The process for meeting the professional standards varies. For AST, ET and Chartered London Teachers, applicants demonstrate that they have met the professional standards in their application and have provided evidence of their practice. AST and ET candidates undergo a 1 day in-school assessment conducted by an external assessor (DCFS 2009b; DCFS 2011). In Scotland, the Standard for Chartered Teacher is met through completion of a post-graduate programme of study at Masters Level.[3] In the Welsh pilot model, CT courses are delivered through University providers. An accreditation scheme also formed part of this pilot.

An important feature of these models is the financial reward attached to them, though remuneration varies. Successful attainment of the Chartered London Teacher Standards brings a financial reward of £1,000. Advanced Skills Teachers can progress through an 18-point pay spine, starting at £36,618 for AST1, rising to £55,669 at AST 18. The salary scale for ET ranges from £38,804 to £50,918. For AST and ET, salaries are further enhanced through a London weighting (DCFS 2009a). In Scotland, as CTs progress through their post-graduate programme of study they

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[1] The teaching workforce in Scotland in 2009 was 52,993 (Scottish Government, 2009).

[2] AST has not been adopted in Wales.

[3] An accreditation route for becoming a CT in Scotland was also available from 2003 to 2008 in line with the original terms of the Teachers' Agreement.

receive a salary increment for every two courses successfully completed.[4] The start-ing salary at the first point of the pay spine is £35,253 rising to £41,925 on comple-tion (Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers 2009a). The model of CT piloted recently in Wales did not offer a financial incentive/reward for participants though they did not have to pay course or tuition fees, unlike Scotland. In his evalu-ation of the pilot scheme, David Egan recommended the extension of the CT initiative in Wales (Egan, 2009:16) and advised that the career and financial incentives for the future development of CT in Wales should be considered (Egan, 2009:78).

The development of these professional grades and status can also be viewed as the introduction of incentivised forms of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and of performance-related pay. Teachers in England and Scotland have a contractual commitment to participate in CPD. In Scotland, the requirement for teachers is to undertake 35 hours of CPD in each school year. CPD activities are usually recorded in a CPD portfolio or record. Undertaking further professional learning and study that is beyond contractual obligation and leads to a professional award, rewards indi-vidual effort to develop professionally. However levels of uptake, particularly in relation to CT in Scotland, may suggest that the financial reward alone is not a suf-ficient incentive and that other factors such as time, school culture and context and personal commitments may preclude involvement (McMahon et al. 2007). Unresolved questions include ways of ensuring that the professional standard is maintained once awarded and the implications of this (including financial) if it is not.

Reward and recognition are two important features of AST, ET and CT. A third dimension, contribution, has been more contested, particularly in relation to CT. While both AST and ET relate to a specific post, CLT and CT confer professional status but are not attached to a post. ASTs in particular have a clearly defined role (see Table 43.1):

> to provide pedagogic leadership within their own and in other schools driving forward improvements and raising standards in teaching and learning (DCFS 2009a:19).

This focus on pedagogic leadership is central to the professional standards relating to each model. In each of the professional standards a 'leadership role' is under-lined. In the Revised Standard for Chartered Teacher (2009), this is made explicit:

> The Chartered Teacher demonstrates a sustained commitment and capacity to systemati-cally evaluate and reflect upon his/her effectiveness as a teacher and as a leader of learning in order to further develop his/her practice (SCT, 4.2).

In England, ETs are expected to be 'willing to take a leading role in developing workplace policies and practice and in promoting collective responsibility for their implementation' (Professional Standards, E1) while ASTs should be 'willing to take on a strategic leadership role in developing workplace policies and practice and in promoting collective responsibility for their implementation in their own

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[4] Programmes are structured around the equivalent of a 12 course/module programme based on academic credit of 180 credits. The salary increment linked to CT is awarded at 30 credit intervals.

Table 43.1 Roles for advanced skills teachers, excellent teachers and Chartered Teachers

Advanced skills teachers	Excellent teachers	Chartered Teachers (Scotland)
Participating in initial teacher training	Participating in the induction of newly qualified teachers	Leading and/or contributing to projects
Participating in the induction and mentoring of newly qualified teachers	Participating in the professional mentoring of other teachers	Supporting, advising and mentoring colleagues
Advising other teachers on classroom organisation and teaching methods	Sharing good practice through demonstration lessons	Developing aspects of the curriculum and leading curricular change and assessment in the school
Producing high quality teaching materials	Helping other teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment	Leading in-service on research work or educational development
Disseminating to other teachers materials relating to best practice and educational research	Helping other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching practice on pupils	Developing relationships in school and beyond to the wider community
Advising on the provision of continuous professional development	Undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process	SNCT, (2009b:4)
Participating in the appraisal or review of performance of other teachers	Helping other teachers, including those on capability procedures, improve their teaching practice	
Helping teachers who are experiencing difficulties	DFCS (2009a:125)	
Producing high quality resources and materials, including video recordings of lessons, for dissemination in their own school and other schools		
DFCS (2009a:123)		

and other workplaces' (A1) (TDA 2007). The professional standards expect that ETs will 'work closely with leadership teams, taking a leading role in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practice that contribute to school improvement' (E13) and ASTs should be 'part of or work closely with leadership teams, taking a leadership role in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practice in their own and other workplaces that contribute to school improvement' (A2).

The Welsh model is designed to be accessible to practitioners who wish to develop their classroom expertise and to those considering a leadership role.

This is reflected in the Chartered Teacher Standards (GTCW 2007) in which CT are expected:

- To 'have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of what constitutes effective leadership' (1.3) and 'exhibit effective leadership skills' (1.3.1).
- To take lead in contributing to a professional community (2.4).
- Take a leading role in supporting and motivating colleagues to improve their practice, giving advice and feedback (3.2.1) (GTCW 2007).

Finally, while the leadership commitment for Chartered London Teachers is not made explicit, the CLT Standards specify that CLTs are teachers who 'play a key role in transforming education in London by working to raise the achievements of all pupils and by challenging educational under-achievement and disadvantage' and who

> build on best professional practice, including observation of others and teachers sharing experience; promote London teachers and their teaching as leading the way in professional practice and career development. (CLT 2010; Bubb and Porritt 2008)

For ASTs and ETs, the professional standards and professional duties specify what is expected of, and from, these teachers. Until 2009 a role for CT was not clearly defined so while the Standard for Chartered Teacher marked the level of accomplishment expected of these experienced teachers, their role and contribution was less clearly articulated.

In the original workforce remodelling agreement in Scotland, reached in 2001 (A Teaching Profession for the Twenty-first Century or the Teachers' Agreement), CT was defined as a status and not a role and the duties for CTs were the same as for all classroom teachers. This was problematic for the CT themselves and for their school leaders/managers and indeed many in this latter group felt alienated from the CT initiative. In the original terms of the agreement, there was no obligation or responsibility for teachers to inform their school leaders/managers that they were seeking or had been awarded CT status (Connelly and McMahon 2007). This could result in a tension between the kinds of duties and activities CT might wish to become involved with and what school leaders could reasonably ask them to do (McMahon et al. 2007).

In many respects, in the first phase of its development, CT were more 'irritants in the system' rather than 'in and of it'. The award of CT status to the first recipients from 2004 onwards challenged traditional leadership and management structures in schools, even those that had adopted more distributive forms of leadership. Part of this was to do with the nature of the agreement reached in 2001 which specified that the duties of CT were to be the same as a classroom teacher and a lack of guidance and clarity around what CT could do and be asked to be involved with. While not universal, schools and local education authorities have been slow to adapt to, and accommodate, the small but growing number of CT. The experience has been varied across Scotland's 32 educational authorities. A report by Scotland's inspectorate (HMIe) in 2007 found that 'there were too few CT and that the arrangements were not facilitating the teachers to work with their colleagues to secure improved outcomes for learners' (HMIe 2009:27). A further report, 2 years later in 2009,

commented that a few education authorities had created networks to support CT but noted 'overall, however, education authorities have yet to systematically audit and develop the wider contribution which Chartered Teachers can make to improvement activities and most notably as key players in the realisation of Curriculum for Excellence' (HMIe 2009:27–28). The report also noted that 'in many schools and education authorities, senior staff were uncertain about the role of Chartered Teachers in contributing to professional development and school improvement' (2009:28).

Concerns in the early years of the CT initiative about impact, value addedness and accountability, particularly given the enhanced salary that accompanies CT status, resulted in a Ministerial Review of the initiative in 2006, only 3 years after its launch. As a consequence of the recommendations from the review, a new *Code of Practice for Chartered Teachers* was published in 2009, alongside a revised *Standard for Chartered Teacher. The Code of Practice* reiterated the original terms of the agreement:

> The Chartered Teacher remains primarily a classroom teacher and at no point should the Chartered Teacher be regarded as part of the school's management structure. (SNCT, 2009a)

However in a new departure, the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) acknowledged and affirmed a role for CT as 'leaders of learning':

> …the SNCT endorses the growing movement away from the traditional concept of leadership within schools simply being the responsibility of the head teacher and senior managers to the view that every qualified teacher has, by definition, a leadership role to play. A broader range of staff, including Chartered Teachers, will have a leadership role promoting inclusiveness, and contributing towards enhancing a culture of collegiality as set out in the SNCT Code of Practice on Collegiality. The Chartered Teacher should be able to promote and develop creative approaches to teaching and learning and contribute to the quality of educational experience. (SNCT, 2009a:2)

Other recommendations from the review reflect further attempts at systemic adaptation and accommodation including the requirement that teachers seeking CT status should inform their head teachers and that all stakeholders should actively promote the scheme (Scottish Government 2008:11–15).

The evolving leadership agenda in Scotland has also sought to address the anomaly of CT in the Scottish education system. A new policy document, *The EIS and Leadership in Schools* from Scotland's largest professional association for teachers, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS 2008, 2010), noted that CT is 'perhaps the first development in Scottish Schools that has developed what is effectively a qualification relating to a "leadership" function which sits outside management structures' (EIS 2010:9). A clear theme of the document was the need to promote fresh thinking on leadership: recognising that 'every qualified teacher has, by definition, a leadership role to play in schools;' '…rejecting top down systems of management which have been a feature of many schools in the past' and situating CT within this (p. 4). To accompany the launch of this policy document, the EIS established a new partnership with two Scottish universities (University of Edinburgh and University of Glasgow) to develop and offer a post-graduate Certificate in Developing Leadership and Learning.

Accomplished Teaching and Teacher Leadership

The EIS policy document on leadership in schools, the revised *Standard for Chartered Teacher* and the *Code of Practice on the Role of Chartered Teachers* together have provided greater clarity and guidance as to the place and role of CT in the education system in Scotland and arguably align it more closely to models of teacher leadership than previously.

The conceptual models associated with teacher leadership and the evolving literature and research base that has grown around it are helpful in trying to discern and elicit the conceptual bases for the newer models of accomplished teaching in the United Kingdom (for example, York-Barr and Duke 2004). Forde, in her analysis of the leadership agenda in Scotland, queries whether the privileging of leadership development in Scotland has led to a loss of focus on the nurturing of expertise in pedagogy (Forde 2009). She questions how in an educational policy context currently dominated by the leadership agenda, CT can become and remain catalysts for change without becoming accommodated within the management functions of a school which have been focused largely on the implementation of governmental policy.

Forde argues that the role of the teacher leader needs to be imbued with firstly, ideas of 'evidence-based' practice, 'action research' and 'knowledge creation' processes which enable teachers to develop their expertise and secondly, with reflection and interrogation of purposes and values underpinning their practice to enable them to make informed decisions about teaching and learning. Rather than teacher leadership and accomplished teaching existing as 'competing ideals' she concludes that 'it is only by reasserting the centrality of accomplished teaching in the development of teachers as leaders will the processes of teaching and learning be enhanced in the classroom and across the school' (Forde 2009).

This focus on accomplishment and leadership is reflected in the revised *Standard for Chartered Teacher* (2009) in which CTs are expected to be 'at the forefront of critically engaging with practice and to take a leading role in its development and implementation of change in current and future educational initiatives'. The CT is described as

> … an accomplished, innovative teacher who demonstrates sustained enhanced expertise in practice. The Chartered Teacher embraces and actively promotes the values, principles and practices of equality and social justice in all areas of work. The Chartered Teacher is a critically informed, reflective practitioner who systematically evaluates the nature and extent of impact achieved for learners and learning. The Chartered Teacher plays a leading role in the professional development of colleagues and makes a recognised contribution to the educational effectiveness of the school and the wider professional community (SCT 2009).

This conceptualisation and articulation of CT as an accomplished practitioner sought to affirm and strengthen key features of the original Standard, notably the critically reflective, collaborative, evidence-based approach to practice underpinned by professional enquiry.

Similar accomplishment is expected of ASTs and ETs. ASTs are seen as 'models of excellent and innovative teaching' using their skills to 'enhance teaching and learning by undertaking and leading school improvement activities and CPD for other teachers' (TDA, 2007:3). ET are expected to provide 'an exemplary model to others through their professional expertise, have a leading role in raising standards by supporting improvements in teaching practice and support and help their colleagues to improve their effectiveness and to address their development needs through highly effective coaching and mentoring' (TDA, 2007:3).

Recent developments in relation to CT could be seen as an attempt to mainstream, integrate and embed CT within the education system, something which Ingvarson has identified as one of several future challenges including the need to strengthen the role of the profession in operational aspects of the scheme, ensure the scheme is based on a valid and reliable assessment of classroom performance, mainstream the scheme and integrate the scheme with changing conceptions of effective leadership (Ingvarson 2009:451). Ingvarson notes that the CT scheme is a carefully developed example of a 'standards-based professional learning system leading to professional certification'. Such systems, he notes, consists of:

- Standards that describe what accomplished teachers now do, providing thereby, long-term direction for teachers' professional development.
- A new infrastructure for professional learning that is responsive to teachers' demands for activities that help them meet the standards.
- Valid, reliable and fair assessment procedures for providing professional certification to teachers who meet the standards.
- Substantial financial recognition from school authorities for teachers who gain professional certification (2009:455).

In his analysis of the Scottish Chartered Teacher scheme, Ingvarson recommends the creation of new roles that 'capitalise on the expertise of Chartered Teachers and free them up to work with other teachers'. However, he points out that a key problem occurs when schemes for recognising accomplished teachers are grafted on to unchanged models of school organisation and management, recalling the early 1990s, when 'most Australian states made the mistake of lumbering often trivial extra work on to full time advanced skills teachers to justify the extra pay, rather than thinking through how their expertise might be best deployed in leading projects to improve teaching and learning' (2009:462). For Ingvarson, new roles should have been conceptualised and legitimised to 'free up' the expertise of advanced skills teachers and make it available to other teachers, such as in the English concept of Advanced Skills Teacher (2009:462). He suggests that schemes such as the CT scheme in Scotland, Advanced Skills Teacher in Australia and National Board Certification in the USA should be 'merged with new conceptions of teacher leadership, and new approaches to distributing the kind of leadership skills that has an impact on student learning outcomes' (2009:462).

While Ingvarson proposes greater alignment with conceptions of teacher leadership, Forde cautions wariness about notions of 'teacher leadership which co-opt Chartered Teachers, potentially remove their contribution in terms of

critical analysis and enquiry based practice'. She argues instead that the contribution of these as 'disruptive figures' should be recognised (Forde 2009).

The construction of CT as a disruptive figure reflects both the context and circumstances in which the programme was introduced and the structures and systems in which CT had to find a place. Unlike ASTs and ETs, where roles and duties have been clearly defined, the first CTs had, in many respects, to find a role for themselves. It also reflects the discourse that has developed around CT that identifies it with activism and challenge and with CTs as agents of change (Sachs 2003; Williamson and Robinson 2009). Indeed the first CTs were often seen as 'early crusaders' and 'lone warriors' trying to find their place in school systems that could be unwelcoming, unresponsive and potentially hostile (Reeves 2007).

These early experiences of CTs were indicative of the lack of synchronicity in the pace and nature of change across education and school systems. While much has been achieved in articulating more distributive models of school leadership, processes, contexts and professional cultures for accommodating new grades of teacher were less well developed, especially in Scotland. In 2002, Day and Harris outlined the type of leadership needed for successful school improvement in the twenty-first century suggesting that it is

> Not simply that associated with a role or function but instead is a dynamic between individuals within and without an organization in which effective leaders focus on the relationship among individuals within a school and the promotion of pedagogical leadership which places an emphasis on the development of the school through shared purpose and the development of this (2002:960).

They propose that 'such pedagogical leadership invests in capacity building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual and professional capital for teachers' (2002:960) though for this to be the case there is an assumption that teacher leaders are 'in and of the system'.

Day and Harris also identified a high degree of trust as necessary in relation to the type of the leadership they outlined (2002:960). One of the factors that has inhibited the growth of trust in relation to CT is rooted in the principle of self-nomination that underpins access to CT programmes of study. According to the terms of the Teachers' Agreement (2001), access to CT programme was to be available to all teachers who had reached the top of the main salary scale had maintained a CPD record and had been issued with a Certificate of Eligibility by the General Teaching Council. There was no requirement or obligation on a teacher to inform their head teacher that they were undertaking CT studies. As a consequence many school leaders/managers felt alienated from the process and the initiative, and effectively were.

Trust has grown as the CT initiative has become gradually more embedded within the system, though the principle of self-nomination remains contentious. In their 2009 report, HMIe noted that:

> Because entry to the Chartered Teacher programme was by self-nomination, some teachers undertaking the programme were not of themselves models of good teaching practice. Head teachers did not always know who among their colleagues was undertaking the programme (2009:28).

The secrecy that was associated with CT and concerns, in some instances, regarding teacher quality, impacted on the development of the CT initiative in its early years. The Ministerial Review Group sought to address this by recommending that teachers should inform their head teachers when embarking on a CT programme (Scottish Government, 2008). Recent efforts have involved more public and visible engagement for CTs, for example, showcasing their work for other colleagues at regional and national seminars and conferences. Distrust amongst colleagues that CTs reported in the early days of the initiative (McMahon et al. 2007) is being replaced by a more collegial culture in which CTs report being consulted by colleagues on aspects of pedagogy and supporting colleagues to develop and change their practice.

In a research study conducted in 2007, some of the first CTs reported barriers to contributing in their schools. The barriers were perceived to be:

- A lack of understanding on the part of school managers and local authorities.
- The hierarchical structure of schools where decisions are habitually 'top-down' and class teachers are therefore not expected to contribute to generating ideas and initiatives and where certain roles, e.g. mentoring probationers, are reserved for managers.
- A lack of value, and hence time, given to professional dialogue and interaction among teachers which is thought to be linked to a general lack of value ascribed to teacher knowledge and expertise (at both school and local authority level).
- A wariness on the part of managers to place 'demands' on CTs which could be interpreted as 'illegitimate' given the terms in which the initiative had been developed (McMahon et al. 2007).

The CTs in the study reported ways in which they were making a range of informal contributions and engagement in the wider life of the school. In a more formal way, a number of CTs were contributing to CPD and were involved in mentoring and coaching of other colleagues. As the CT initiative evolves the potential for it to become a model for pedagogical leadership, particularly at a time of major curriculum reform in Scotland, is strong. Though the research base for CT is still small, early indications are that it is in the area of pedagogical leadership and curriculum development and innovation that CTs are most active and have most influence. This is similar to the reported experiences of ASTs.

A 2008 study commissioned by the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) in England looked at the benefits, status and effectiveness of CPD. As part of the study, the role of ASTs and ETs in CPD was explored. The study found that in many schools ASTs and ETs played an important part in organising and leading CPD activity (Pedder et al. 2008). For ASTs, where there is a defined role and time allocated for 'outreach', participants in a recent study (Bubb 2009) reported ways in which their work in other schools impacted on them, for example, through gaining new ideas that could be taken back and shared with their team. Involvement in outreach is also reported as offering a significant professional learning and development opportunity. One respondent commented that 'I am learning much more than I can by being in my class 5 days a week. I have time to reflect on my practice and

where it needs to improve and this benefits my children greatly.' While the focus of outreach for ASTs is supporting other teachers, this may entail working with teachers who are 'weak' or who are 'failing' and 'about to go through competency'.

However, despite a more defined remit, ASTs can still experience a sense of dislocation within the system, as one AST commented:

> You're still in no man's land – not leadership team material, not the real consultant – the middle man that gets the job completed behind the scenes and is trundled out as that excellent teacher for inspections etc. (Bubb 2009)

This lack of conceptual clarity about the role and place of emerging models of accomplished teaching in the United Kingdom reflects the emphasis placed on the leadership of head teachers and not teachers as leaders. Muijs and Harris (2006) note that in the United Kingdom 'a great deal of research has focused upon leadership of the head teacher but little account has been taken of alternative conceptualisations or models of distributed or shared leadership, particularly those that address issues of teacher professional learning and growth' (Muijs and Harris 2006:963). Teacher leadership, they suggest, is a concept that is not generally used within schools in England. It is a term that is taken, at face value, to mean the responsibilities of those in formal leadership roles and positions. However, Harris and Muijs propose that the idea of teacher leadership as 'teacher led improvement' has more resonance with teachers and they tend to associate this term with collaboration, partnership and professional networking (Harris and Muijs 2004:2).

Muijs and Harris suggest that teacher leadership is best understood by those in schools as 'professional initiative and learning, both within and between schools, which is focused on improvement at classroom, department/year group and whole-school levels' (2006:964). They outline the different models of teacher leadership within schools some of which are externally driven (i.e. Federations, Partnerships, Networked Learning Communities) and others generated internally within the school through action research groups, working groups or through formal and informal leadership roles (Harris and Muijs 2004). More recent models such as AST, ET and CT could also now be included with these.

In their 2004 study, Muijs and Harris found that activities described as, or associated with teacher leadership generally have a positive effect upon levels of teacher morale and teachers' sense of self-efficacy. The sense of ownership and involvement felt by teachers leading development work was shown to contribute to positive feelings of professional self-worth.

The 2004 study found that shared leadership could have impact on teacher retention with teachers more likely to stay in a school where a culture of teacher-driven collaboration and leadership exists. The study also found that where teachers are given significant responsibility for school development and change, there is evidence that their work can have an impact on and contribute to school improvement (Harris and Muijs 2004).

With the evolution of ASTs, ETs and CTs in recent years, understandings of teacher leadership can be extended to include these models of accomplished teaching, with the caveat noted by Forde above. Harris and Muijs (2004) outline the formal and informal leadership roles that teacher leaders can be involved in, and while

management roles and functions are explicitly not attached to AST, ET and CT, other informal roles such as coaching, leading a new team and setting up action research groups reflect the work that many of these practitioners are involved with (Harris and Muijs 2004).

For Muijs and Harris, teacher leadership is also conceptualised as a set of behaviours and practices that are undertaken collectively and suggest that teacher leadership is centrally concerned with the relationships and connections among individuals within a school (2006). This relates to five dimensions that they have identified to the way in which teachers understand 'teacher leadership': shared decision-making, collaboration, active participation, professional learning and activism (Harris and Muijs 2004). Arguably, these dimensions are also at the heart of models of accomplished teaching (Reeves 2010).

Leaders of Learning

The emergence of new models of accomplished teaching and their potential role as leaders of learning presents both challenges and opportunities. One challenge is to continue to develop and refine conceptual understandings of teacher leaders and accomplished teachers. Another challenge is to develop the research and evidence base relating to this.

In their 2004 study of teacher leadership, York-Barr and Duke undertook a comprehensive review of the teacher leadership literature. Their study found that much research focused on small-scale qualitative studies describing dimensions of teacher leadership practice, teacher leader characteristics and conditions that promote and challenge teacher leadership. They found that less is known about how teacher leadership develops and about its effects and that the construct of teacher leadership is not well defined, conceptually or operationally (York-Barr and Duke 2004:255). A similar gap is noted by Muijs and Harris in relation to the United Kingdom where the spotlight has tended to be on head teacher development.

The work and impact of accomplished teachers is opening up to research with greater focus on exploring the impact of teachers' professional learning and CPD than previously. The study commissioned by the TDA in England in 2008 looked at the benefits, status and effectiveness of CPD and found there to be 'a lack of effective CPD in terms of levels of classroom contextualised practice, collaboration with colleagues, and research informed professional learning'. The study also found that that 'there is little indication that current CPD is seen as having an impact on raising standards or narrowing the achievement gap' (Pedder et al. 2008:33). Amongst the study's recommendations for addressing the lack of effective CPD, ASTs and ETs were seen as having a role. The study recommended that since Advanced Skills Teacher and Excellent Teachers were the exception to the general pattern of low practices and values for collaborative approaches to classroom-based CPD, they are particularly well placed to take CPD leadership roles, working with teachers to encourage more collaborative and research-informed approaches to classroom-based

CPD (Pedder et al. 2008:44). It was also suggested that AST and ETs could play an important leadership role in school and teacher learning (Pedder et al. 2008:51).

As the number of ASTs, ETs and CTs continues to grow, a research base is beginning to emerge. A key question, particularly where financial remuneration is linked to the award of professional status and recognition, is impact across levels within education systems and for groups within this. There have been efforts to look at issues and questions of impact in relation to AST (Taylor and Jennings 2004; Bubb 2009) and CT (Reeves 2007; McMahon et al. 2007; Murray and Matheson 2008; Williamson and Robinson 2009; Carroll 2009; Fox 2009; Ingvarson 2009; McGeer 2009). Given the relatively early stage development of the models, the design for initial studies has tended to be based on self-reporting though more system wide approaches are now emerging.

The potential opportunities for ASTs, ETs and CTs are rich and they have the capacity to impact on learning and teaching and to improve outcomes for learners; to influence and support the development of others, including beginning teachers and to ensure further ongoing professional development on an individual and collective basis. With a growing international focus on the issue of teacher quality, new models of accomplished teachers can contribute to improving educational standards. York-Barr and Duke note that 'teacher expertise is at the foundation of increasing teacher quality and advancements in learning and teaching'. They argue that this expertise becomes more widely available when accomplished teachers 'model effective instructional practices, encourage sharing of best practices, mentor new colleagues and collaborate with teaching colleagues' (2004:259).

These are the types of activities that ASTs and CTs report involvement with, and so rather than seeing a dichotomy between teacher leaders and accomplished teachers, future development should reinforce the expectation that teacher leaders should be accomplished teachers and that accomplished teachers are teacher leaders. York-Barr and Duke's review of teacher leaders found that 'teacher leaders are or have been teachers with significant teaching experience, are known to be excellent teachers, and are respected by their peers' (2004:267).

Further thinking and development across the education system and the teaching profession is also needed in relation to who can be involved in supporting developments and improvement in learning and teaching for young people, extending across the sector, including schools and educational authorities. Part of this entails providing opportunities for school leaders to learn more about the nature and purpose of models of accomplished teaching and ways in which they can contribute effectively to school improvement and effectiveness. This was a specific recommendation of the 2008 TDA study: that school leaders could profitably be alerted to the distinctive remit of ASTs and excellent teachers and further develop the potential of these post holders within schools' CPD contexts (Pedder et al. 2008:18).

The development of the CT initiative in Scotland and AST and ET in England has also generated questions about the locus of expertise and leadership in schools which in the past has tended to be seen as residing with school leaders and managers. A further dimension to this, in relation to CT, is the emphasis on collegiality which

was a central aspect of the 2001 Teachers' Agreement. This emphasises the collegial and collaborative nature of teachers' work with processes developed to facilitate it. Added to this is the growing recognition and influence of collaborative forms of professional enquiry so that there has been a shift from teaching as an individual activity to one that extends across the school community.

Given these shifts, integration into the system, so that they are 'in and of it' rather than existing outside it, will not compromise their potential to be 'disruptive figures', promoting criticality and a future change orientation, in the way articulated by Forde (2009). It does mean that these important resources can be utilised and their expertise capitalised on, with greater impact for schools. While their number within the teaching profession remains small, relative to the size of the teaching workforce, the development of new models of accomplished teaching is not insignificant. More integrated and visible roles within schools and local education authorities will enable expertise to be utilised in strategic and planned ways that can be more closely linked to the needs of the school as well as to the individual practitioner. Existing outwith, or on the periphery of the system, curtails this, with the danger that at a time of economic downturn and cost cutting across education, the benefits of rewarding enhanced practice may not be overt and indeed may be at risk.

Conclusion

In the rapidly changing socio-economic context of the twenty-first century, schools need teachers who can respond to change and who can question, innovate, develop and lead. They require teachers who can work across sectors, teams and tiers of management to design new curricula, develop new learning experiences and opportunities and monitor and evaluate from an inquiry stance. They require teachers who can become leaders of learning in their own classrooms and across schools and learning communities. Such leaders of learning or pedagogical leaders should be accomplished teachers, who have had their expertise recognised by attainment of a professional standard and in some models, rewarded financially. They are practitioners who through their own ongoing learning and development have the professional knowledge and skills to be able to support other teachers in their development.

ASTs, ETs and CTs have the potential and the capacity to become the type of enhanced practitioner that education in the twenty-first century requires but their roles need to be supported and developed if they are to avoid remaining anomalies that do not fit comfortably within the system or to avoid becoming educational curiosities. This will entail reconciling their disruptiveness – generated by a critically informed, evidenced-based approach to developing their practice – with the agency that the award of professional status brings, to contribute to and lead change in schools. Otherwise these initiatives for recognising and rewarding accomplished teaching will remain undersubscribed by teachers and underutilised by school leaders and managers and an opportunity for teacher-led improvement based on a model of pedagogical leadership will be lost.

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Chapter 44
Ensuring Staff Development Impacts on Learning

Sara Bubb and Peter Earley

Introduction

This chapter draws on recent research to explore staff development and its impact on pupils. Given the growing recognition that staff – teachers and support staff – are a school's most important resource and that their development is crucial to school effectiveness, the role of staff development leaders in schools and how they lead the staff learning process strategically is key. Emphasis is also given to how time is used for staff development. Recent research has found that development time is often under-used by schools so staff development leaders need to ensure this time is used well for staff learning and that it impacts positively on pupil outcomes.

The evaluation of staff development, if undertaken in a systematic way, can lead to improved outcomes for both pupils and staff but a key obstacle to a better appreciation of the impact of staff development lies in the way that it is conventionally defined. Many people think of staff development as activities to be engaged in rather than as the actual development of their knowledge and expertise, which may (or may not) result from their participation in such activities. Staff development is conceived in terms of inputs and not as the changes effected in their thinking and practice. There is little reference to outcomes – what will happen as a result of development activity.

Guskey's (2000) well-known model of professional development evaluation is outlined with reference to more recent models including one developed by the authors (Bubb and Earley 2010). This model explores the different sorts of impact on staff (for example, classroom practice, personal capacity and interpersonal capacity) and the difference in the learning and experience of the children. For example are the pupils learning more, enjoying their learning and engaging in a wider range of learning activities?

We begin by considering what staff development is and why it matters.

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What Is Staff Development?

There are many definitions of staff development, such as England's Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA):

> Continuing professional development (CPD) consists of reflective activity designed to improve an individual's attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. It supports individual needs and improves professional practice (www.tda.gov.uk/cpd).

We do not favour the use of the terms 'CPD' or 'continuing professional development' because we think that many colleagues in the school and college community may feel excluded by the term 'professional'. It is a term usually associated with teachers. We feel strongly that the development of the whole workforce is vital, not just the teachers who in many schools make up less than half of the total staff. So, except when citing others, we try not to use the term.

For us staff development is:

> …an on-going process encompassing all formal and informal learning experiences that enable all staff in schools, individually and with others, to think about what they are doing, enhance their knowledge and skills and improve ways of working so that pupil learning and well-being are enhanced as a result. It should achieve a balance between individual, group, school and national needs; encourage a commitment to professional and personal growth; and increase resilience, self-confidence, job satisfaction and enthusiasm for working with children and colleagues (Bubb and Earley 2007, p. 4).

Or, put more simply, staff development is about adult learning, ultimately for the purpose of enhancing the quality of education of children and young people. That is why it is so important.

Our definition can be unpacked further:

1. Staff development is an on-going process.
2. The process is what is important: development is something that is within the person all the time, not something done to or provided for them.
3. It encompasses all formal and informal learning experiences.
4. We develop in many ways: through the planned and formal activities as well as the learning through experience, to say nothing of the thoughts that occur while watching a film or which pop into your head in the shower.
5. It enables all staff in schools, individually and with others, to think about what they are doing.
6. Thinking about what you are doing is crucial. As Socrates said, *I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think.*
7. It enhances knowledge and skills.
8. You have got plenty of knowledge and skills and now you are going to get yet more. We are not into deficit models.
9. It improves ways of working so that pupil learning and well-being is enhanced.
10. The goal of all development should be that ultimately things are better for the children and young people.

11. It achieves a balance between individual, group, school and national needs.
12. We need to develop and help others so that the benefits are multiplied.
13. It encourages a commitment to growth.
14. As Benjamin Britten said, 'Learning is like rowing against the tide. Once you stop doing it, you drift back'.
15. It increases resilience, self-confidence and job satisfaction.
16. Working with children and young people can be tough, especially on the emotions so we need to look after and develop our resilience, confidence – and enjoyment of our work.
17. It gives staff renewed enthusiasm for working with children and with colleagues (Bubb and Earley 2010, p. 2).

Why Staff Development Matters

Ideas about the central importance of staff development to the success of any organisation are well-recognised. For example, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) see people as the prime resource of the organisation, claiming that managers get better results (in terms of productivity, customer satisfaction, profitability and employee retention) by managing and developing people better. In education, the James Report (DES, 1972), published as long ago as 1972, stressed that each school should regard the continued training of its teachers – we would now say 'workforce' – as an essential part of its task for which all members of staff share responsibility. This government report ensured that the further professional development of staff became a national issue and it still is today for the simple reason that people development is crucial for school improvement. The staff is the most important resource of the organisation, but particularly in people-based organisations such as schools and colleges.

As the bulk of a school or college's budget is spent on paying staff it is also crucially important to get the most out of people in order to improve pupil well-being and learning. The professional and personal growth of all staff is a key component in developing children's and young people's learning. The on-going development of staff is crucial in helping to address the organisation's priorities identified to bring about improvement, enhancing the quality of the learning experience, and generally making things better for pupils. In *The Logical Chain* Ofsted (2006) reported that 'schools which had designed their CPD effectively and integrated it with their improvement plans found that teaching and learning improved and standards rose' (p. 2). Overall, staff development was found to be most effective in the schools where senior managers fully understood the connections between each link in the chain (what we prefer to call the staff development cycle, see Fig. 44.1) and recognised its potential for raising standards and enhancing well-being and therefore gave it a central role in planning for improvement.

Staff development makes a crucial difference. It ultimately leads to school improvement whether couched in terms of better teaching and learning, student and staff welfare
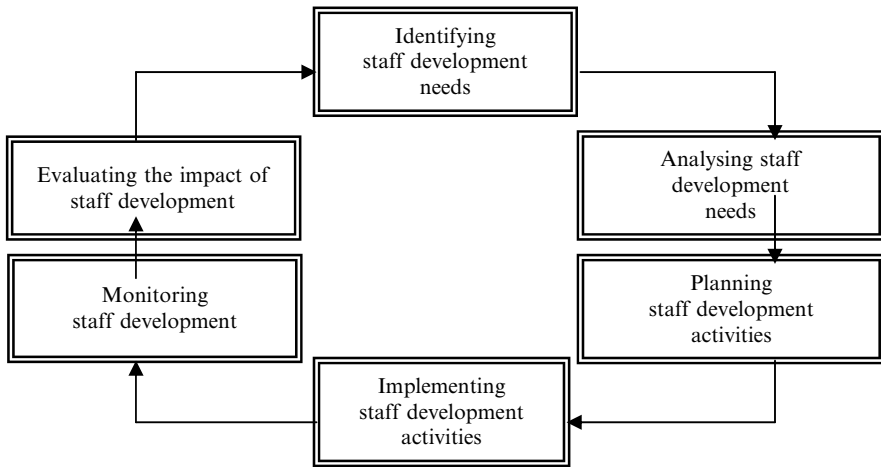
Fig. 44.1 The staff development cycle

and well-being. People development is more effective in enhancing the performance of organizations, including schools and colleges, than any other factor because it:

- Helps everyone be more effective in their jobs, so pupils learn and behave better and achieve higher standards;
- Improves recruitment because:
- A school or college that is focused on staff development will be looking to find people with the right skills;
- Word gets around about the places where you are looked after, and where you are not;
- Contributes to a positive ethos where people feel valued and highly motivated;
- Improves staff retention because staff feel fulfilled and successful;
- Saves money – the costs of recruiting and inducting staff are high.

We believe staff development is a responsibility and an entitlement and it makes for a learning-centred community – the pupils are learning and so is the staff. Organisations which give serious attention to the development of their staff will reap rewards: effective staff development enhances students' learning and well-being because the adults improve their ways of working. Staff development should also add something to the organisation's overall capacity to improve; and it should be able to build upon the collective learning of its people. As a result of the training and development opportunities made available staff will benefit in many ways. For example, they may have:

- Thought more deeply about what they are doing;
- Enhanced their knowledge;
- Developed skills;
- Improved ways of working;
- Shown a greater commitment to professional and personal growth;
- Become more resilient;

- Gained greater self-confidence;
- Increased job satisfaction;
- Shown more enthusiasm for working with children;
- Shown more enthusiasm for working with colleagues;
- Increased a colleague's learning;
- Enhanced a colleague's well-being;
- Enhanced student and pupil well-being;
- Increased student and pupil learning; and
- Increased other staffs' learning in order to improve things for their students and pupils (Bubb and Earley 2010, p. 3).

Recent research findings show that the school workforce considers training and development of great importance. In England, for eight in ten teachers, staff development is an important factor when considering both their future in their current school and in the teaching profession (Ipsos/MORI 2007). The State of the Nation study (McCormick 2008; Storey et al. 2008) identified a number of reasons why teachers in England choose to undertake training and development, namely to:

- Work with other colleagues
- Improve their professional abilities
- Address immediate school needs
- Gain more information
- Have a positive impact on pupil learning
- Improve academic achievement
- Follow-up previous development activities
- Address immediate classroom needs
- Gain a better understanding of national curriculum requirements (Storey et al. 2008, p. 32).

A growing number of schools are making a particular point of developing support staff, often because they have been neglected in the past. They constitute a growing proportion of the staff and have been shown to have a significant role to play in children's learning. At many schools, people have progressed significantly in their careers as a result of their development: they have gained qualifications and moved to more highly skilled posts. The effects of training and development on staff – both teachers and support staff - can be significant. Its impact can change people's lives and careers and of course it can make people happier in their job. When staff feel valued they go the extra mile.

Staff Development Leadership

Staff development does not just happen. Although individuals have a responsibility for their own development, the school too needs to be learning-centred and provide opportunities for all staff to continue their learning. Staff development therefore has

Table 44.1 Features of strong and weak staff development leadership and management

Where staff development is well led	Where staff development is not well led
It is seen as a very important job.	It is tacked on to many other jobs.
The role is taken by deputy or assistant heads (secondary schools) or heads and deputies (primary and special schools).	The role is taken on by someone with too much else to do.
People have been leading staff development for a long time.	People are new to the role.
They have many years' experience not only in teaching but also in leadership roles.	People have limited leadership experience.
Leaders are well-informed, knew where to find out more and share their knowledge.	Leaders do not know what they do not know.
Leaders distribute responsibilities appropriately, including to senior support staff.	Leaders try to do too much themselves.
Staff development has significant investment in both time and money.	Staff development is poorly invested in. Staff feel constrained by the school's tight budget.
Administration is efficient and things run smoothly.	Admin systems are not efficient.
Staff development is strategic and focussed on benefits to pupils and school improvement.	Staff development is not strategic and given to those who ask rather than according to need.
Governors are involved at a strategic level.	Governors simply attend training themselves but not involved in a strategic way.
Staff development is closely linked with school self-evaluation and improvement plans.	Staff development is not closely linked with school improvement plans. Individuals are doing their own thing but not contributing to strategically planned improvement.
Impact evaluation is seen as fundamental.	Staff development is not evaluated and so it is hard to know what impact it has.
Investment in people's development appears to reduce staff absence rates.	High staff absence rates.

Bubb et al. 2009, p. 18

to be led, co-ordinated and managed well to make a difference. What does strong staff development leadership look like? Our research found (see Table 44.1) features of strong and weak aspects.

In researching staff development in outstanding schools (Bubb et al. 2009) we found that leaders of the schools with the strongest staff development engendered an ethos in which all pupils, teachers and support staff were valued and seen as learners in their own right. Indeed several headteachers said that adult learning was instrumental to their schools' continued improvement and was a key part of their shared vision and values. Leaders fostered, and staff felt, a sense of both entitlement to and responsibility for their own development and learning. Individuals were motivated to identify and seize opportunities, and showed initiative in doing so. Staff felt valued and there were numerous examples of high motivation levels and impressive commitment.

Several very successful staff development leaders started by being responsible for new teacher induction and trainee teachers and then assumed responsibility for

the whole school workforce. This graduated responsibility, starting at the all important beginning of careers, appears to be a key to success.

Where staff development leadership was weak, people were relatively new to the role and some were new to leadership more generally. They had many other roles and so devoted little time to staff development, tending to perceive the role more in terms of co-ordination rather than leadership. They mainly had little administrative support and tried to do too much themselves. In several cases, the current post-holder had taken over with varying degrees of willingness from someone who had been ineffective or absent on long-term sick leave.

Leading and managing staff development effectively requires an enormous amount of work. An understanding of the staff development cycle (see Fig. 44.1) is vital. You need to identify and analyse institutional and individual needs, plan how to meet them, meet them, monitor progress and then evaluate the impact on staff and pupils before starting to look at new needs. Although impact evaluation is the final part of the cycle it is very helpful if questions about evaluation are raised at the outset in order to ask the question, what do we hope to achieve? Staff development leaders need to have an overview of every stage of the staff development cycle to ensure that key tasks are done and done well, as outlined below.

1. Identify and analyse staff development needs

   • Organise systems that identify training and development needs in the context of the school development plan
   • Identify individuals' needs, or set up systems for others to do so
   • Factor in national or local policy initiatives that affect specific groups of staff.

2. Plan how to meet needs

   • Plan how best to meet these needs within a budget and based on up to date knowledge of the options available and accreditation
   • Create a staff development plan, demonstrating how the school will provide the necessary opportunities that have the desired impact.

3. Arrange for training and development to take place, matching the needs of individuals and groups of staff to appropriate activities

   • Support, monitor and assess NQTs according to the induction guidance
   • Support, monitor and assess trainee teachers and other staff who are on placements e.g. nursery nurses
   • Induct new staff into how the school as a whole works, as well as their roles
   • Find the funding and allocate resources in line with priorities and monitor resource expenditure on staff development
   • Help design and co-ordinate training programmes and development days
   • Support and advise others in their staff development role.

4. Evaluate the impact on staff and pupils

   • Design and implement systems to monitor and evaluate staff learning and performance
   • Evaluate and improve the school's training and development.

The leadership and management skills required to lead staff development effectively might include:

1. Strategic planning – to see the bigger picture and understand whole school needs
2. Facilitation – to help lead a learning-centred community
3. Administrative and organising skills
4. Coaching – to encourage
5. Emotional intelligence – to understand people's needs and aspirations and respond to them
6. Financial – making the most of the budget
7. Communication – orally and in writing
8. Evaluation – to measure impact
9. Technical – computing, databases, websites
10. Passion – for lifelong learning.

Frameworks such as the one in Table 44.2 can help in evaluating the leadership of staff development and where it needs to develop.

A range of people can and should be involved in supporting and co-ordinating staff development. One person, usually a member of the Senior Leadership Team, needs to have a strategic overview of how staff development can make a positive difference to the school or college and how this can be achieved. Then a range of different people will have varying roles:

- Governors have a strategic role in overseeing staff development
- Team leaders have a responsibility for their team's development
- Performance reviewers identify people's strengths and development needs
- Other staff such as advanced skills and excellent teachers, higher level teaching assistants (HLTA), school business managers, mentors and coaches can support colleagues' development.

And of course all staff have a personal responsibility to develop their knowledge and skills.

Robinson et al (2008) found that in secondary schools staff development was usually led by a deputy or assistant headteacher. In primary and special schools the headteacher has the most significant leadership role, albeit distributing leadership or delegating tasks. Job titles have a combination of the words in Table 44.3. These are indicative of the complexity of the role – and how much is expected from it.

The job titles might be different but the people fulfilling them must be clear as to their leadership responsibilities. It is important that, 'The title chosen should signal the cultural and strategic vision for CPD as well as indicating the purpose and actions of those holding the role' (Porritt 2008, p. 22).

The staff development leader role also requires a great deal of knowledge and keeping up to date in a rapidly changing world. In England there are training programmes such as the National College's Leadership Pathways unit on the Strategic Leadership of CPD and the TDA's national development programme for staff development leaders, both of which contain distance learning components. Keeping up to date and being aware of what is coming up are part of being strategic.

Table 44.2 The diagnostic framework for staff development leadership, (London's Learning 2007)

Emerging	Developing	Establishing
There is a growing recognition of the need to support professional development of all staff to achieve school priorities.	There is a shared aim to build capacity to develop all staff with established plans to achieve this.	There is a clearly stated and shared vision for the school as a professional learning community to which all members of the community contribute and from which they will benefit at all stages of their career.
A CPD policy is in place which highlights training opportunities.	CPD policy links to performance management, team plans and school improvement plans.	CPD policy emphasises that CPD is key to self-evaluation, standards of teaching and learning, and school improvement.
The CPD co-ordinator reports to the school	The CPD co-ordinator is a member of the school leadership team with other major responsibilities.	The CPD leader is a member of the school leadership team whose overall responsibility, as stated in the Job Profile, is for the learning of all staff in the school and its impact on standards and school improvement.
Leadership Team. The Job Profile focuses on operational management of professional development. There is a recognition that the role needs to become more strategic.	Within the Job Profile the CPD co-ordinator has an overview of the learning of all staff in the school.	
Training opportunities are managed by a CPD co-ordinator.	Career and professional development of staff is supported by the CPD co-ordinator.	Career and professional development of staff is supported by leaders at all levels and the CPD leader is responsible for a whole school approach.
Some team leaders see it as their responsibility to support teachers' learning plans.	All team leaders have delegated responsibilities to support individual learning programmes and to evaluate the quality of provision. Some team leaders have been trained in coaching and mentoring skills.	All team leaders are responsible for their team's learning programmes; ensure that individual learning plans impact on teaching and learning; inform performance management targets; contribute to school self-evaluation and impact on school improvement priorities. Team leaders have been formally trained in the skills of coaching and mentoring.
A CPD summary, as currently required, is in the Governors' annual report to parents.	The headteacher reports regularly to governors on CPD opportunities, evaluation of quality of provision and value for money.	A nominated governor promotes the learning of all staff; ensures that resources are appropriately allocated; evaluates the impact of the school's professional development framework on learning and teaching and disseminates findings to the governing body.

www.lgfl.net/lgfl/sections/cpd/londonslearning/ede/

Table 44.3 Staff development job titles

Words	Staff group	Roles
CPD	Teachers	Co-ordinator
INSET	NQTs	Leader
Human Resources	Trainee Teachers	Manager
Professional Development	Support Staff	Officer
Staff Development	Teaching Assistants	Administrator
Professional Learning	Admin	Head
	Site	Deputy
		Assistant head
		Senco

Why Staff Development Needs to be Strategic

Staff development has to meet a variety of needs: individual, team and organisational. There are also needs resulting from local and central government policy initiatives. Unsurprisingly sometimes there will be tensions between these various types of need within a school or college and decisions will need to be made about how they will be met.

Staff development leaders have to ensure that any training and development will meet the needs of both individuals and organizational priorities. They need to ask:

National needs

- Is the school preparing for the current changing educational scene?
- What is the evidence base that ensures that the school is developing with regard to the Every Child Matters outcomes?
- Is the school developing its extended provision appropriately?
- How do we know the needs related to address new skills and qualifications frameworks?

Institutional needs

- What are the main sources of evidence for the school's current needs?
- Is there a sense of whole institutional ownership of the self-evaluation form and school improvement plan?
- Does the school improvement plan look at success/maintenance issues as well as identified gaps and weaknesses?
- Is the data analysis robust and fully understood by the workforce?
- Is the evidence gathered at different levels, including by the pupils themselves?
- How do individuals, teams, governors, parents and the community contribute in a genuine and constructive way?

Individual needs

- Are the needs and aspirations of staff members being looked at in the round
- Is performance management working?
- How far does the school address pastoral and career needs?

- Is there an issue of the reliability of individual needs information or is it a case of people not knowing what they do not know (something that can result when systems are too formulaic and mechanistic)? (adapted from CfBT/Lincs 2007)

Resources are not infinite. This is why leaders of staff development need to be strategic: that is to be forward thinking, trying to foresee what lies ahead and which influences may be important in the future. Strategic thinking involves rising above the day-to-day operational issues, scanning the environment and looking at the bigger picture. Strategic leaders, including those of staff development, involve themselves in five key activities:

- Direction setting
- Translating strategy into action
- Aligning the people and the organization to the strategy
- Determining effective intervention points
- Developing strategic capabilities (Davies and Davies 2009, p. 15).

Strategic leadership of staff development is about providing for the sustainability of the school. It builds capacity and capability to meet future challenges as well as those of the day-to-day. It means schools must become 'learning communities'. Being strategic means making decisions and integrating staff development with school improvement plans so that teaching and learning improve and standards rise. A medium to long-term plan is needed of how the school's aim and vision will be met by helping individuals develop. A strategic approach:

- Puts pupil learning at the heart of all staff development
- Aligns school, team and individual staff priorities
- Uses pupil data to inform decisions about staff development
- Makes efficient use of resources.

Staff development needs to be closely linked with school self-evaluation and improvement plans. To ensure that the journey from self-evaluation to improvement is made as quickly and as well as possible, staff development has to be strategic. Ten factors were identified as important in using the outcomes of self-evaluation accurately to identify staff development needs and then meet them so that the school improves.

1. The leadership and management of staff development need to be effective.
2. People need a clear shared understanding of staff development.
3. The school needs to develop a learning-centred culture.
4. Individuals' development should be linked to the analysis of needs through performance management and career development as well as self-evaluation and school improvement.
5. The goal, and the reasons for it, must be clear and ultimately should make a difference to pupils.
6. The quickest, most effective and best value for money forms of staff development should be chosen based on what will suit individuals.
7. Staff development that involves discussing, coaching, mentoring, observing and developing others is highly effective.

8. Time needs to be made for staff development.
9. Staff development should be monitored and its impact needs to be evaluated.
10. Learning and development should be shared, acknowledged and celebrated for improvement to be sustained. (Bubb and Earley, 2008, p. 27)

Winning hearts and minds at the outset is a crucial factor in school improvement initiatives. This involves convincing the staff concerned that the proposed change is both desirable and possible. This can be done by sharing information and data, encouraging individual accountability, getting the right people involved and raising morale. Sometimes having 'ordinary' staff leading initiatives can have a greater influence than using the more usual leaders.

The challenge for staff development leaders is to ensure that all sections of the school workforce benefit from the development that will 'move them on'. In any size school this is difficult, but in a large one there will be more people to liaise with. Operating strategically also involves using time to good effect and how time is found for staff development is considered in the next section.

Making Time for Staff Development

Schools must be creative in finding time for staff development during the course of the normal school day or working week. Involvement in teams, working parties, planning groups and committees – events and activities not always associated with staff development – can provide solid learning opportunities. It is now generally recognised that workplace development opportunities are crucial and complement workshops and other forms of external input (Earley and Jones 2009; NCSL 2008).

Conditions of service for school teachers and support staff vary across different countries. In some there is a requirement for school teachers to 'clock up' a certain number of hours of staff development as is the case in many other professions. Lecturers in the Further Education sector in England are expected to record 30 hours a year, whereas in Hong Kong there is an expectation for teachers to undertake 150 hours of professional development over 3 years.

A report from the Institute of Public Policy Research (Margo et al. 2008) states that teachers in England spend only 3% of their time on staff development and that they have less development time than those in other OECD countries. They suggest this is due to the limited contractual time for teachers to undertake development activities and 'because funding is devolved to schools, not teachers, and is not ring fenced, meaning that it may be used for purposes other than CPD' (2008, p. 9).

Finding time for staff development is a challenge but is existing time being well used? At a time when many schools complain that there is 'no time for staff development' hard questions need to be asked about how contractual time is being spent, especially the five additional 'development' days which are part of English teachers conditions of service. These five additional days, commonly known as training, INSET, professional, Baker or development days, are when pupils are not on site. These five days form a significant part of the contracted time available for teachers'

professional development so schools need to ensure this time is being used well. Recent research evidence suggests that in many cases it is not.

The Staff Development Outcomes Study (Bubb et al. 2009) found that just four out of ten senior staff and teachers said that their school used their development days as five whole days and this resulted in extra days of holiday for most staff as the missing days were usually converted into after school sessions. It was found to be a bigger issue in secondaries with only a fifth of secondary school respondents saying that all five days were used. Others converted different numbers of whole training days into twilight sessions or private study. However, not all of a development day was spent on training and development. Only a third of senior staff and nearly four out of ten teachers reported that the whole of their last training day was used for this. One in eight teachers in English secondary schools reported spending *none* of their last closure day on training and development.

When asked how useful development days had been over the last 12 months, over a third of senior staff thought they were 'very useful' in helping people develop. This was in contrast to teachers and support staff who found them less useful: about a quarter said they were 'of little use'. Perceptions of usefulness of staff development days also varied by school phase for teachers, with primary and special school teachers being more positive about these days than secondary school teachers, although still not as positive as senior staff. Around a fifth of primary school teachers said staff development days in the last 12 months had been 'very useful' compared with only a tenth of secondary school teachers. A third of secondary school teachers found them 'of little use' and 6% said they were 'a waste of time'. The most useful days were seen as the ones which offered ideas that could be used directly in the classroom, provided opportunities to meet with others and discuss issues or helped to build teamwork and ensure 'everyone was singing from the same hymn sheet'. Special school staff felt that too much of their 'development' time was spent on necessary but routine refresher health and safety training.

Evaluating Impact

Currently, much evaluation of staff development is impressionistic and anecdotal. Long-term impact is rarely considered. Evaluating the difference that staff development makes is important but is often thought of as a complex process. Exposure to, and participation in, staff development activities may or may not bring about change to individual staff's beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours. These changes to individuals may or may not lead to changes in the classroom and school practice. And these changes may or may not lead to improvement in pupil outcomes. Many factors influence children and young people's achievement and it is difficult to find evidence that isolates the link between staff development and achievement. People thus struggle with impact evaluation. It is the weakest link in the training and development cycle. Indeed, some schools do not even try to evaluate it, taking for

granted that doing lots of training and development activities will automatically result in better staff and pupil learning.

For instance, a secondary school-wide project on independent learning where teachers were involved in peer observation of new strategies had no clear impact because nothing was done at the outset to plan how to gauge its effectiveness. Attempts to judge the effectiveness of the initiative at its conclusion in relation to its aims included:

- A request for a text or email response from staff to the project manager, supplemented by informal conversations gave positive responses:

  – I try to bring in one of the thinking skills as often as possible.
  – It gave me the opportunity to step off the treadmill and think about how I teach.
  – I have seen a rapid improvement in the evaluative skills of my Year 10 students. I would generally not expect them all to reach this level until later in the year.

- Departmental teams were encouraged to share perceptions gained through the project, but this did not happen in all cases and the results were not collated
- The project manager interviewed some students whose teachers had been involved, but found it difficult to get information that was both useful and reliable.

In many ways this was a highly successful initiative: the school had managed to complete a complex project involving peer observation and videoing of its teachers. Feedback from teachers showed that it had probably helped to improve practice, but it was unclear in what respects or to what extent. There was no systematic attempt to gauge the impact on the degree of independence demonstrated by students. How outcomes had been improved and the quality of teaching and learning enhanced were not made clear – and the project leaders were not sure what to do next (Bubb and Earley 2008, pp. 46–47).

The Staff Development Outcomes Study (Bubb et al. 2009) found that 70% of teachers and 53% of support staff reported that the impact of their training and development was evaluated at their school but much evaluation is impressionistic and anecdotal – 'we just know that things are better'. Long-term impact is rarely considered. The impact of staff development is rarely evaluated against the intended impact and any unplanned gains. In general, people just fill in an evaluation form after a training event or discuss their performance during the appraisal process.

For it to become commonplace and useful, evaluating the impact of staff development should not be burdensome and require lots of paperwork. The benefits need to outweigh the burden. The first step in evaluating impact is to understand what staff development is – and what it is not. A key obstacle to a better appreciation of the impact of staff development lies in the way that it is conventionally defined. Many people think of staff development as activities to be engaged in rather than as the actual development of their knowledge and expertise, which may (or may

not) result from their participation in such activities. They conceive of staff development in terms of inputs and not as the changes effected in their thinking and practice. There is little reference to outcomes – what will happen as a result of development activity.

Staff development itself is not one activity or set of activities. It is not definable as a course, a series of courses, a programme of training or study or even a set of learning experiences. Rather, staff development is the upshot or outcome that may result from any or all of these activities and from the individual's reflection on day-to-day experience of doing the job.

How Does Impact Happen?

A common way of looking at impact is that staff learning, attitudes or beliefs change first which leads to a change in their practice, resulting in an improvement in student learning or well-being.

> Staff learning, attitudes or beliefs change
> which leads to
> Change in their practice
> resulting in
> Improvement in student learning or well-being.

However, Guskey (2005) considers that it rarely happens that way in practice. The more typical order of change in practice is first, student learning, second, attitudes and beliefs last. He believes that it is experience that shapes the attitudes and beliefs; it is not the other way around.

> Change in staff practice
> … resulting in …
> Improvement in student learning or well-being
> … which leads to …
> Change in staff learning, attitudes or beliefs.

People change when they see that the new skills they try out make a difference to pupils. The most important element is not the initial input or training but putting things into practice and follow-up. Also any training or input needs to be quickly followed by a chance to put learning into practice ideally in people's everyday work.

Joyce and Showers (2002) suggest that for training to be truly effective, it needs to include the following five components or stages:

- Theory – where the new approach is explained and justified
- Demonstration – to give a model of how this can be put into practice
- Practice – so that the teacher can try out the new approach
- Feedback on how well the new approach is working
- Coaching – to help the teacher discuss the teaching in a supportive environment and consider how it might be improved.

Their research showed that, without the opportunity to receive feedback and coaching, there is no measurable impact on classroom practice. However, once these two components are added, in particular the final coaching stage, there is a large and measurable impact on practice. This is why activities that span a period in time are more effective that one-offs. The opportunity for collaboration with others who have been through the same training will help too.

If impact evaluation is built in from the start, rather than as an afterthought, then it is more likely to make a difference. Target outcomes can be planned before engaging in a development activity. This requires a clear picture of what things are like before the activity takes place (the baseline) and a vision of how things should look when it is completed (the impact). The importance of establishing a baseline and collecting evidence is further explored in Earley and Porritt (2009).

Levels of Impact

Thomas Guskey (2000, 2002) is well known for his work in the field of professional development and impact evaluation. He considers that there are five levels of impact evaluation with improved pupil outcomes being the desired result. These five levels, shown in Table 44.4, are:

1. Participants' reactions;
2. Participants' learning;
3. Organisation support and change;
4. Participants' use of new knowledge and skills;
5. Pupil learning outcomes.

Guskey suggests that reversing these five levels can be useful in professional development planning:

1. What impact do you want to have on pupils? How will you know that you have had this impact?
2. If that is what you want to accomplish, then what practices do you need to implement?
3. What does the organisation need to do to support that e.g. what time/resources do people need?
4. What knowledge do people have to have and what skills do they have to develop?
5. What activities (e.g. training) do people need to gain those skills or knowledge?

We have adapted this idea to include additional levels of impact, as seen in Table 44.5.

Table 44.4 Five levels of professional development evaluation

Evaluation level	What questions are addressed?	How will information be gathered?	What is measured?	How will information be used?
Participants' reactions	Did they like it? Was their time spent well? Did the material make sense? Will it be useful? Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful? Were the refreshments fresh and tasty? Was the room the right temperature? Were the chairs comfortable?	Questionnaires administered at the end of each session	Initial satisfaction with the experience	To improve programme design and delivery
Participants' learning	Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills?	Paper and pencil instruments Simulations Demonstrations Participant reflections Participant portfolios	New knowledge and skills of participants	To improve programme content, format, and organisation
Organisation support & change	Was implementation advocated, facilitated and supported? Was the support public and overt? Were the problems addressed quickly and efficiently? Were sufficient resources made available? What was the impact on the organisation?	District (LA) and school records Minutes from follow-up meetings Questionnaires	The organisation's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation and recognition	To document and improve organisation support
	Did it affect the organisation's climate and procedures?	Structured interviews with participants and district or school administrators Participant portfolio		To inform future change efforts

Table 44.4 (continued)

Evaluation level	What questions are addressed?	How will information be gathered?	What is measured?	How will information be used?
Participants' use of new knowledge and skills	Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills?	Questionnaires Structured interviews with participants and their supervisors Participant reflections (oral and/or written) Participant portfolios Direct observations Video or audio tapes	Degree and quality of implementation	To document and improve implementation of programme content
Student learning outcomes	What was the impact on students? Did it affect student performance or achievement? Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being? Are students more confident as learners? Is student attendance improving? Are dropouts decreasing?	Student records School records Questionnaires Structured interviews with students, parents, teachers and/or administrators Participant portfolios	Student learning outcomes Cognitive (performance and achievement) Affective (attitudes and dispositions) Psychomotor (skills and behaviours)	To focus and improve all aspects of programme design, implementation and follow-up. To demonstrate the overall impact of professional development

Guskey 2002, p. 48

Table 44.5 Levels of impact

Level	Measuring
Baseline picture	Where you are
Goal	Knowing what you want to achieve
Plan	Planning the best way
The experience	Initial satisfaction with the experience
Learning	Knowledge, skills, attitudes acquired or enhanced
Organisational support	How the school helps (or hinders) the person using their new learning in their job
Into practice	Degree and quality of change (process, product or staff outcome) following from the development activity.
Pupils' learning outcomes	Impact on experience, attainment and achievement of pupils
Other adults in school	Sharing learning with other adults and the impact on them
Other pupils	Impact on experience, attainment and achievement of other pupils
Adults in other schools	Sharing learning with adults in other schools and the impact on them
Pupils in other schools	Impact on experience, attainment and achievement of other pupils

Bubb and Earley 2010, p. 60

Types of Impact

It is helpful to think of the type of impact to be achieved. Earley and Porritt (2009) look at impact evaluation in terms of three separate yet related areas – products, processes and outcomes. Products might include policies or resources. Processes are new or improved systems. But do they really make a difference to staff and children and young people? For example, producing an induction policy for new staff – a product – has the potential to have an impact but it is not what makes the difference per se. Rather, it is how new staff feel about and use it that may make a difference and the outcome would be the difference their feelings or newly developed practice makes on the way they carry out their role and ultimately, the difference this makes to the learning and experience of the children.

It is useful to consider the different changes we might see in individual members of staff. The impact on individuals' self-esteem is vital. For example, most support staff thought their training and development had at least some impact on their existing skills, new skills and confidence. Approximately two-thirds of support staff said their training and development had either 'some' or 'a lot of impact' in these three ways, whilst around a fifth said there was only 'a little' impact (Bubb et al. 2009, p. 42).

Frost and Durrant (2003) distinguish between three sorts of impact on staff: classroom practice, personal capacity and interpersonal capacity. Ultimately, of course we want to see a difference in the learning and experience of the children – this is what enables us to say that development of staff has been effective. What sort of impact are we looking for in pupils? We can look at their:

- Enjoyment in learning
- Attitudes

- Participation
- Pride in and organisation of work
- Response to questions and tasks
- Performance and progress
- Engagement in a wider range of learning activities.

In our research (Bubb et al. 2009, p. 46) teachers were asked what impact had their training and development in the last 12 months had on pupils. The most popular response was 'better learning' which over half of respondents (55%) selected, followed by 'greater motivation' (38%) and greater confidence (28%). Interestingly, only 15% thought their training and development had resulted in better test results. Several noted the difficulty in quantifying the effect of staff development on pupils' results or outcomes as 'there are too many variables'.

Where to Find Evidence of Impact

Assertions and intentions are useful but staff development leaders need to have evidence of the actual impact of activities. There is much confusion between monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring at the most basic level simply means checking that what has been planned has happened. This can be carried out in a wide range of ways: reminding people, asking for progress reports, and so on. The difficulty lies in finding a system that is manageable, efficient and that works. However, measuring someone does not make them grow: it is simply the check that proper nourishment has had its natural effect.

Talking to staff about their development is important, but so is listening to what pupils say. In our research some Year 10 students remembered when lessons were more interactive as a result of staff training on accelerated learning 2 years before. They thought it was a shame that staff had not kept it up as they thought it helped.

The most common forms of evidence of impact are listed in Table 44.6 where they are divided into qualitative and quantitative sources.

Table 44.6 Sources of evidence of impact

Qualitative	Quantitative
Evaluation after training	Questionnaires – staff
Notes from meetings	Questionnaires – pupils
Discussions – staff and pupils	Test result analysis
Resources, photos, video	Performance data
School improvement partner/external consultant	Analysis of usage e.g. of a VLE
Observation	Pupil tracking records
Pupil work samples	
Performance management reviews	
Departmental reviews	
Self-evaluation forms	
Written reflections/learning journals	

Much impact evaluation can be incorporated into performance management procedures and school self-evaluation processes. Participants may need time to reflect on what they have learnt and what the impact may be – this could be on their own or with others. Pupil interviews and questionnaires can be very illuminating. Participants can consider questions like these with their line manager, or another identified person such as a mentor or coach:

1. What is your evidence of impact?
2. Does the evidence suggest that the activity had the intended impact on you, your colleagues, your school and your students, when judged against the agreed criteria? If not, why might this be the case?
3. Were there any unexpected outcomes?
4. By considering the impact and its cost, do you think that this activity has been cost-effective?
5. What should you or other key staff do to maximise the impact of this development?

As Guskey says:

> Good evaluation does not need to be complex; what is necessary is good planning and paying attention to evaluation at the outset of the professional development program, not at the end. (Guskey 2002, p. x)

Schools need to be clear about exactly what pupil progress is expected as a result of staff development activities. If they are able to do this, the issue of impact evaluation becomes less problematic.

Evaluating staff development and ensuring it has an impact is important and a mature approach to thinking about and understanding the quality of the development of school staff is needed. Without that understanding, staff development will continue to be regarded merely as a series of courses and other occasions or events, rather than as the change, development and improvement of practice for the benefit of learners – both adults and students.

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Chapter 45
Realities and Perspectives Arising from Professional Development to Improve the Teaching of Reading and Writing: The CETT Project in the Dominican Republic

Liliana Montenegro

Introduction

Socio-cultural research into the practice of language has led us to understand that reading and writing are social constructions and, as such, have changed throughout history, geography, and the multiplicity of human activities. In the complex world of the twenty-first century in which we live, characterized by accelerated changes in knowledge, technology, the phenomenon of globalization (not just of marketing but also of culture), and the diversity and transformations of the economic, social, and political orders – reading practices are changing. Literate people are needed in a much wider sense, given that the quantity of texts, themes, new mediums, and the diversity of information sources that every girl or boy encounters today are much richer than those to which children had access only 30 years ago. We cannot think that the same strategies we used to teach reading and writing in the past will be appropriate today.

Research conducted in the last few decades in the fields of psychology, linguistics, cognitive sciences, sociology, and teaching, has allowed us better to understand the process of teaching/learning to read and write. The results of these studies and the reflection on teaching skills that have accompanied them have supported new proposals in this field.

In thinking about how and why students who are now in primary education will use language when they are adults and imagining them as both buyers and producers of critical texts as well as sensitive to values of equity and social change, those of us who share in their education, must teach them to read and write from a critical perspective (Montenegro 2007; Haché de Yunén 2009). Reading and writing

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is more than a psychological and linguistic process, it is also a social process. As Cassany puts it (2004, p. 7):

> It is worth saying that 'to read is a transitive verb' and that there is no such thing as a neutral or abstract activity called reading, but multiple, varied, and dynamic concrete forms of reading in each genre, in each discipline of human knowledge, and in each human community. Thus learning to read requires not only developing the above-mentioned cognitive processes, but also acquiring the socio-cultural knowledge that is particular to each concrete practice of reading/writing: how the author and reader uses each type of text, how each kind of use is named in accordance with pre-established traditions, how meaning is negotiated according to the linguistic conditions and forms of thinking of each specific discipline, etc.

Drawing from an experience of 7 years working for the Center of Excellence for the Training of Teachers (CETT) in the Dominican Republic, this paper reflects on the impact of developing leadership skills in a large number of public primary school teachers within the context of a socio-cultural, communicative, and critical perspective of teaching, in order to support the acquisition of critical reading and writing skills in their students (Ferreiro 2001; Costa 2006). In this sense, the literacy experiences underlying this paper rest on knowledge derived from psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, socio-linguistics, and socio-cultural history theories.

Antecedents

Data on educational progress in Central America provides a context for understanding the condition of children's literacy in the Dominican Republic. As far as net coverage in primary education between 2000 and 2004 a recent report notes that although coverage rates have increased, still in Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic 13 from every 100 children are not enrolled in this level (PREAL 2007), and fewer than half of the children have had any type of preschool opportunities. This goes against the well-known fact that "a good preschool education reduces the need for remedial elementary education and increases the probabilities of success and retention in the educational system" (PREAL 2007). As far as retention is concerned the report highlights the fact that many students repeat grades and abandon their studies, making the proportion in the Central American region higher than in the rest of Latin America and almost eight times higher than in developed countries. In the case of the Dominican Republic, repetition of primary grades is around 7.8% (UNESCO 2009).

Results of the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE) that measured achievement in Language (Reading and Writing), Mathematics, and the Sciences among third and sixth grade students in 16 Latin American countries (UNESCO 2008), with the exception of Cuba and Costa Rica show a low level achievement for Central America and the Caribbean, particularly in language skills. The majority of students are only able to understand a fragment of the texts that they read. This means that they have difficulties in integrating and generalizing information that they encounter in a paragraph, in grasping information that is not

explicit, in understanding translations from one source to another, in inferring information, in discriminating between words that are similar to each other; all in all, they have difficulties in understanding the meaning of what they read and in making textual interpretations. In the case of the Dominican Republic 31.4% of the third-grade students achieved below Level I, which implies that they could not even locate information with only one meaning that was repeated in the text and isolated from other information. This level of achievement is well below the regional average.

The United Nations decreed the years 2003–2013 as the Decade of Literacy in order to achieve improved education for justice and dignity of all humankind, which in Latin America means significantly reducing the current percentage of illiteracy, that now stands at 15%. The rates of adult literacy are also meager in the Dominican Republic in that 12 out of 100 people aged 15 or more cannot read nor write (UNDP 2005). This means that many younger boys and girls cannot be helped at all within their homes to enter the world of written culture, a role that then falls only to the schools.

Meanwhile, schools continue to be unable to resolve the essential problems with which they have always been confronted with regard to written language (Lerner 2001). The situation of the boys and girls of marginalized sectors is especially delicate. As compared to well-to-do sectors they generally lack opportunities to be connected with written language. If the school presents them with written materials that are fragmented and senseless, making them believe that to recognize the differences between *ma* and *sa* indicates that they are able to read, then they are reproducing hegemonic practices that increase the marginalization of the already marginalized (Borzone et al. 2005). If the school system cannot fulfill its own mission, the number of future adults that will be excluded from active participation in the social, political, cultural, and intellectual life of the community to which they belong will rise alarmingly. It is therefore important that this analysis connect the development of teacher leadership with literacy as the goal of the public school system.

Among many conditions that contribute to this worrisome situation of illiteracy in Latin America and, in particular, the Dominican Republic, possibly the following are amongst the more important ones:

- Teacher beliefs about the learning of written language, which seldom have been examined and updated.
- The scarcity of books and printed materials that help students to learn, both within and outside the school system.
- The behaviorist educational model, in force in many school practices, with its focus on teaching centered in the transmission and accumulation of knowledge.
- The lack of opportunities for teachers to adequately share their teaching strategies, their difficulties, and their successes. Neither do they have enough opportunities to update their knowledge. And, in some cases, they also have not developed their own skills in reading and writing.

The Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT)

Within this context, in an attempt to offer an alternative to the teachers' scarce opportunities to update their knowledge and share their experiences, the Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) were established in 2002. This initiative was funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and carried out in three regions of Latin America: the Andean region (Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador), the Central American region (El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Dominican Republic, with help from Mexico), and the English Caribbean. These Centers have the following objectives:

- The development of permanent, professional teacher development opportunities with the purpose of reducing illiteracy and school drop-out rates in the Latin American region.
- Achievement of excellence in the process of learning to read and write among the children of the first four grades of primary education through means of teacher professional development.
- Improvement of the quality of classroom teaching in harmony with the curricular demands of each country.
- Development of critical understanding and expression to support autonomous citizenry.

On the basis of believing that literacy and learning are a key element of democracy, the motives of the program were to provide support to the basic public educational systems in the participating countries of Latin America in order to improve reading and writing as social practices. The Dominican Republic is part of the Central American Program and its project is known as CETT-CA-RD.

The CETT-CA-RD Professional Development Program

This region developed a model for professional development and materials to support it and from 2002 through 2009, it has implemented and refined the model through feedback provided by the technical teams in the participating countries, as well as by the participating teachers, school principals, and facilitators.

The CETT-CA-RD professional development approach seeks to update the personal theories of participant teachers, and to offer them a space to reflect on their educational practices. It is founded on four pillars:

1. Knowledge management
2. A focus on competencies
3. Constructivism
4. The textual, functional, and communicative focus of language teaching

Professional development is carried out through four main modalities:

- *Face-to-face teacher preparation*: As one of the key elements of the program, this modality supports the transfer of the CETT-CA-RD reading and writing approach into the practice of school classrooms. It operates on the basis of workshops where teaching is modeled and supported through technological resources developed by the project (videos, CD ROMS, audio tapes). Face-to-face preparation covers 24 annual hours and is divided into three sessions of 8 h each.
- *Innovative teaching circles*: These meetings allow teachers to share their experiences and collectively reflect on reading and writing themes. Each Circle includes teachers in a network of schools that are geographically near to each other. In the Circles teachers discuss their strengths and weaknesses in Circles also serve to monitor their progress in carrying out their independent study (see below). The Innovative Teaching Circles meet for total of 24 annual hours, divided into eight sessions of 3 h each.
- *Independent study*: This part of the program has the greatest number of hours (40 h annually). It consists of a study carried out by each teacher with the purpose of contributing to his or her conceptual and practical knowledge, and is based on each teacher's active and proactive reflection. The study uses technological media that may be available in their schools. The model also proposes alternative options for rural or urban marginalized schools that do not have access to technology.
- *Classroom accompaniment*: This practice is crucial for the success of the program as it provides teachers with assistance to apply in their classrooms the approaches and teaching strategies developed during the face-to-face and Innovative Teaching Circle meetings. The purpose of this accompaniment is to make the most of what teachers have learnt as well assist them in establishing cohesion between the theories and methods studied and their classroom realities. Each teacher is accompanied once a month for two hours in his or her classroom. The accompaniment also includes collaborative meetings between the facilitator and the school principal as well as with a teaching coordinator of the relevant grade level.

The project facilitators are selected on a competitive basis, taking into consideration their theoretical–practical strengths in the area of reading and writing. They are prepared in face-to-face training sessions and independent study, while also taking part in planning and evaluation meetings for a total of 20 h per month.

The CETT-CA-RD Instructional Pyramid

The following figure illustrates the conceptual elements that form part of the entire set of activities of the CETT-CA-RD program. It is expected that participant teachers will develop a set of competencies that are linked to successful classroom
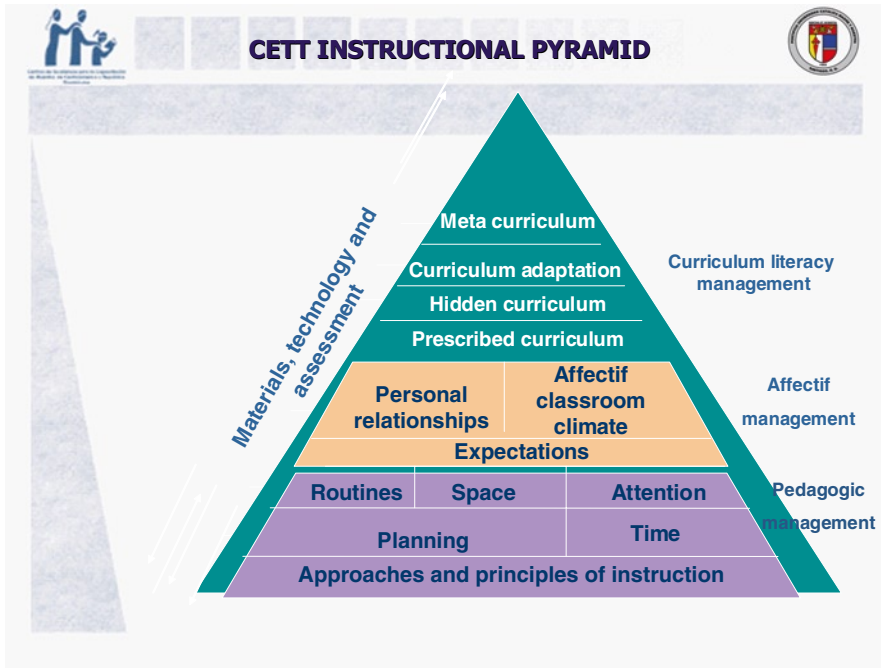
Fig. 45.1 The CETT Instructional Pyramid

teaching and appropriate learning of reading and writing on the part of their students. These competencies are four: (a) basic competencies related to the teaching of reading and writing; (b) competencies related to classroom management; (c) competencies related to affective management or management of emotions; and (d) curriculum development competencies.

A key element of the CETT-CA-RD project is to articulate the curricular contents of all Central American countries, including the Dominican Republic with the development of basic reading and writing competencies. This takes place during the workshops in which reading and writing materials are discussed with participants with a view to their use in the development of basic student competencies. These competencies refer to *concepts* (what students need to *know* in relation to oral and written language), *procedures* or *procedural* contents (what students need to do in order to understand and communicate through oral and written language) and *attitudes* or attitudinal contents (what students need to *know* and *feel* in relation to oral and written language).

Given its emphasis on teaching/learning of reading and writing for life, the project pays special attention to the textual, functional, and communicative aspects of language. Teachers must help their students to understand and to use

the written system of communication, not just have them learn letters and isolated syllables.

CETT-CA-RD Program Materials

CETT-CA-RD's materials are seen as a tool that enhances teaching in the early years of primary education and with vulnerable socio-economic populations. They were prepared as a way of providing stimulus for children in marginalized sector to connect with the written language, something that children in other more favored environments easily have. Because many of their parents are illiterate, these children lack access to written materials. Teachers were also considered as beneficiaries of the materials as means of helping them overcome some of the limitations of their teaching of reading and writing practices and their lack of opportunities to learn further in this field. In some cases, teachers themselves have not developed the reading and writing skills needed to help their students to improve.

The materials were developed on the basis of an analysis of each of the national curricula from Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and the Central American Standards. This review also included a critical examination of best practices in the Region. The process took into account that the materials should be adequate and coherent in terms of the CETT-CA-RD's theoretical approach, feasible as far as their application was concerned, founded upon the results of research, significant in terms of learning, motivating as well as stimulating, pertinent, and up to date. They also should reflect geographic diversity and a Latin American world vision as well as be culturally appropriate for students and teachers.

The following is a list of the materials that were developed for work in the program:

- Training book: Language, Communication, and Innovation in the Classroom: A Possible Utopia.
- Instructional guides and methodologies in the series titled Integrated Reading-Writing Workshops by Grade (three for first grade and six for each of the following grades: second, third, and fourth).
- Theoretical and methodological guides in the series titled Especially for Teachers (three for all grades).
- Packets of diagnostic and formative assessments by grade.
- Technological training resources, an instructional package with videos, CDs, and audio tapes.
- Files for various classroom activities.
- Teaching practice' notebook to encourage the processes of action-research.
- Children libraries for each school (including 70 different types of books: stories, reference works, instructional).
- Instructional games.

Putting the CETT-CA-RD Model into Practice in the Dominican Republic

Some 3,400 teachers from first through fourth grade, principals, and Ministry of Education staff in the Dominican Republic have received professional development based on the instructional model and materials previously described. The selected schools belong to the public education system and are located in urban, urban marginalized, and rural zones. The program has impacted a population of approximately 125,000 boys and girls.

In working with these in-service teachers, the focus has been on expanding their leadership capabilities in order that they may develop comprehensive and critical competencies in the children they teach, by means

- Interactions with different types of texts.
- Access to stimulating and interesting reading material requiring higher cognitive rather than memorization skills.
- Encounter with a diversity of learning situations, many of which are not experienced in their homes or communities.
- An environment with frequent opportunities to read and write.
- Reading and writing opportunities of similar duration as available for boys and girls in higher socio-economic school environments.

In line with recommendations (Cassany 2004, p. 19) the teacher professional development assists teachers to enact in their classrooms the following reading and writing competencies:

- Situate the text within the socio-cultural context of the work

  – Identify the author's purpose or intention for writing the text within its socio-cultural context.
  – Recognize the content or data that supports the discourse in accordance with available information on the theme within the community. Recognize the values and hierarchical importance given to these, identify possible data manipulation as well as degree of data coherence.
  – Identify the voices embedded in the discourse.
  – Detect "positioning."

- Recognize and participate in the discursive practices proposed by the text

  – Interpret the text in accordance with the parameters contained in the discourse used.
  – Recognize its socio-cultural characteristics.

- Calculate the effects that the discourse produces in various contexts

  – Consider the situation and the relativity of personal interpretations.
  – Estimate the interpretations that other persons (relevant to us) might give to the discourse.
  – Integrate the discourse interpretations made by other readers once they are formulated.

The CETT approach also emphasizes the development of teachers' leadership skills through critical review of their teaching practices, reflexive dialog between facilitator and teacher during classroom visits, and support for the teacher, as she or he becomes more independent.

In addition to the benefits of professional teacher development using the CETT-CA-RD approach, we can also mention the following: school principal input into the organization of cooperative school teams; the creation of a literate atmosphere in each classroom; more active classes; schools that are more integrated within their communities; fathers, mothers, and guardians who are closer to school work; teachers who are more motivated, more respectful of the cognitive abilities of their students, and who teach reading and writing for life; boys and girls whose comprehensive and critical competencies have broadened through interaction with various kinds of texts and stimulating written materials and who have developed higher level cognitive skills, not just memorization.

Likewise, putting into practice both series of reading and writing guides throughout seven years and improving them as a result of experience (the majority of them now are in their third edition), allows us to conclude that the guides are a valuable support for the development of a culture of writing at the primary school level. They constitute a self-guided and cost-effective tool, having relied on the richness of texts that circulate socially and of material recycled from daily life. Teachers have said that the *Integrated Reading-Writing Workshops* series helps them to plan and organize their classes, to take advantage of texts in their social surroundings and materials recycled from their own communities, and furthermore that they support the reading and writing competencies of their students in a motivational and participatory manner. They also consider that the *Especially for Teachers* series has been an important resource for theoretical references. The series presents in a non-complex way, crucial themes about reading and writing, children's thinking as they acquire the written system, teaching concepts centered in the subject as learner, multiple intelligences, taking diversity into account, as well as issues related to diagnostic and formative assessment and cooperative work in classroom projects (Aguirre JBS International 2008).

Another novel element is the children's story contests, using the textual narrative guides, which have stimulated the students to write and edit their stories in the classroom. Assisted by the facilitators, the teachers have selected the stories that stand out as being particularly creative and that have complied with the rules of the contest. These stories have been published: "Stories of Fantasy and More, by Dominican Boys and Girls (2008) and Stories of Fantasy and Much More, by Dominican Boys and Girls" (2009).

It is also worth highlighting as an achievement of the program, the organization of 60 reading and writing fairs, in which teachers and principals have demonstrated their leadership in the community by attracting parents, guardians, and others to the school. These fairs have included workshops for parents and guardians, exhibitions of children's work, puppet shows, and story-telling corners, together with an information corner provided with the daily newspapers. These activities have helped to strength school-community interactions.

As far as impact on student learning is concerned external evaluations compared a sample of 3,000 students participating in the program and 3,000 that did not,

Table 45.1 Mean scores in literacy skills: CETT and control schools compared

	Pre-test	Post-test
First grade		
CETT Group	10.08	16.07*
Control Group	11.59	13.81
Second grade		
CETT Group	11.49	15.68*
Control Group	10.92	13.83
Third grade		
CETT Group	10.76	15.37**
Control Group	11.61	13.69

*P<0.005, **P<0.008 between CETT and control groups

through means of beginning and end of the year tests. Results show that it is possible to obtain a momentous change in reading and writing competencies through work with teachers within the framework of a process-centered and critical approach to the teaching of reading and writing. The CETT schools, compared to similar control schools, show a significant statistical difference of 95% for the first grades of basic school, in performance as well as in the growth of critical reading competencies of the students who participated in the program (see Table 45.1).

Current evidence supports the CETT-CA-RD approach of teacher professional development as being effective in fostering real and enduring change in the teachers, as well as in obtaining better results in the classroom in the area of reading and writing, as compared to the traditional cascade models used frequently in Latin America. Findings from the Impact Study carried out by Aguirre JBS International (Chesterfield et al. 2009) also demonstrate this. Research on the CETT-CA-RD impact over student learning carried out by the Universidad del Valle of Guatemala (2010) shows that participant teachers require a minimum of two consecutive years to learn the approach and put it successfully into practice.

The experience of CETT, which used action-research to learn about the context and its needs and its reliance on scientific evidence and other international research for its actions, has helped to point a way of improving the Dominican educational system.

The UNESCO-Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktum Prize, awarded to the Center for Excellence in Teacher Training at the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in 2010, for exemplary performance and results in improving the efficiency of teachers, has contributed to engage the Ministry of Education with the CETT in order to continue with this modality of professional development in the Dominican Republic through the period 2009–2014.

Conclusions and Challenges

The paper described the theoretical bases upon which the work of the Center for Excellence in Teacher Training was founded and the efforts carried out to prepare teacher leadership in teaching of reading and writing, centered on communicative

and textual development of language capacities. Nonetheless, we believe that there is still a long road to travel before the country takes responsibility for this focus. What are the challenges?

In the first place, we believe that literacy achievement is not merely an academic question, but also a political one in that it affects the functioning of basic public education and its assessment and promotion policies. If, as argued by Braslavsky (2003), it is possible to achieve a clarification and reformulation of the definition of literacy then it should be possible to reorient the more general policies that deal with literacy achievement.

Second, improving the capacity for teachers to exert leadership in Spanish language learning also requires learning "how jointly to manage groups of factors that work in synergy together." (UNESCO 2008). Careful analysis of the assessment of learning results in Latin America (UNESCO 2008) has led the Center for Excellence in Teacher Training also to offer professional development for teachers and staff at the Ministry of Education. These programs have been focused on the participants being able to learn about different teaching strategies related to the affective, pedagogic, and curricular elements in the Spanish language that could positively impact the learning of Dominican boys and girls who are most in need. It has also led to the development of standards for quality in this area.

Furthermore, the experience of CETT-CA-RD has shown that there are crucial counterbalancing variables, in the case of the development of competencies in reading–writing, that compensate for adverse socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions. Despite their coming from unfavorable contexts, students are able to achieve good results in reading and writing in their first years at the primary public school. Among these significant variables is a change of paradigm in approach used by the teachers, meaning an open-minded attitude toward innovation. Also necessary are good affective relationships with their students, principals, other teachers, and the members of the community. The use of low-cost materials helps to create a learning atmosphere in the classrooms, as does the use of a classroom library. Teachers need to rely upon good school management by their principals and have the possibility of on-going training. Teachers need to practice formative assessment and pay attention to diversity – both of which entail avoiding allocation of students to homogeneous groups. Also crucial is the involvement of parents and guardians in the work of the school community. What is still to be done? There is a need to keep working progressively, together with the Ministry of Education and the Dominican society, fostering consensus that goes beyond a specific government. It is hoped that these strategies will motivate society to value their teachers as agents of social change and that the functional and communicative model of teaching reading and writing becomes a practice throughout the country.

Third, and in view of the challenges faced in general by the education system it would be important to take note of the recommendations of the PREAL Report (2007) on what is still needed in Dominican Republic:

> To transfer an important amount of responsibility for the management of the educational system and the administration of the schools to the parents, the families, the teachers, and the community in general; to increase public investment in education by at least 5% of the PIB and set aside nearly all of this increase for elementary and secondary education; to

strengthen the teaching profession, establishing salary increases linked to professional development, improving the quality of teachers' initial training and promoting adequate on-going training; and, finally, establishing common standards and broad consensuses, as well as a system of mediation, compliance, and the disbursement of results.

Finally, as stated by Ferreiro (2001): where conditions are most difficult, teaching objectives should be more daring. Those who have very little or almost nothing deserve schools that open their horizons. We believe that through the CETT materials that serve teachers who work under adverse socio-economic conditions; through school reading fairs – that help achieve an improved commitment from parents, guardians, and the surrounding community; through the provision of libraries within the classrooms; and through the creation of a literate atmosphere, we will be assisting students in the development of critical thinking and providing them with the experience of a school that prepares them for autonomous life.

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Chapter 46
Leadership for Learning: Student Perspectives

James Skinner, Alf Lizzio, and Neil Dempster

Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of connections between leadership and learning amongst the young. It does so by drawing on Australian research undertaken with adolescents in schools and sporting clubs as examples of organised settings in which young people gather and learn. Organisations such as these are traditionally structured in hierarchical ways affording young people the opportunity to experience leadership as it is defined by adults as well as leadership because it is experienced amongst peers spontaneously in playgrounds and sporting arenas.

There is no doubt that young people learn formally and informally through the situations they encounter whether at school, on the street or in the freedom and flexibility of the cyberspace available to them through the virtual and real worlds of the internet. Learning and leadership will be evident in these 'unsupervised' settings too, so studying both and the connections between them from young people's perspectives are important for society at large and for those interested in the transition of the young into fulfilling adult lives.

There are other compelling reasons, however, for studying leadership amongst the young and the learning which accompanies it. We outline some of these reasons first before moving on to a discussion of the need for young people's views about leadership and the possible benefits encountered thorough leadership situations. We follow with a description of an Australian Research Council (ARC)-funded study of adolescent leadership in schools and sporting clubs to highlight the need for young people's views about leadership and learning to be heard and for their voices to better inform leadership development in the future wherever it takes place.

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Why Study Youth Leadership?

There is a growing recognition that encouraging and developing young people to engage in leadership is a key social and educational priority. Such interest may be in part due to a perceived shortage of people willing to take on leadership roles in their adult lives and careers. So short is the pool of leaders in the corporate world that a report by McKinsey and Company (cited in Michaels et al. 2001) has suggested that there is a 'war' being waged for leadership talent. In the education sector, the pool of potential leaders is also known to have declined from that available even a few years ago (Gronn 2007; MacBeath 2006b).

There also seems to be a decline in general civic participation that may contribute to a declining interest in community leadership. Gannon (2001) suggests that:

> More Americans than ever before are in social circumstances that foster associational involvement (higher education, middle age and so on), but nevertheless aggregate associational membership appears to be stagnant or declining… American social capital in the form of civic associations has significantly eroded over the last generation. (pp. 116–177)

Such concerns are reflective of Putnam's (1993) argument that the primary purpose of social capital is to secure effective democracy. Putnam highlights participation in communities as a core element of social capital and underscores its basis in 'norms of reciprocity and networks of civil engagement' (p. 167). Putnam (2000) uses a number of sport-related examples to highlight declining levels of social capital in contemporary society. In particular, he discusses the decline in participation in team sports and the rise of individual participation as demonstrated by the quest for fitness through individualised activities such as jogging. Similarly, he points to declining levels of youth participation in organised sports leagues; this is clearly identified in his seminal work titled 'Bowling Alone'. For Putnam, organised league bowling requires participation with a diverse set of acquaintances and represents a sustained form of social capital that is not represented in commodified recreational bowling that allows the individual to play the occasional game (Coalter 2007).

Dempster and Lizzio (2007) suggest that the general decline in civic engagement seen in the United States may be similarly apparent in Australia. In the education profession, for example, studies of teachers and their association memberships (Dempster et al. 2001) show similar trends to those experienced in the United States. Drawing on research by the Australian College of Educators between 1979 and 1999 Dempster et al. highlight the declining active memberships of teachers in church, cultural and social groups, as well as in parents' and citizens' associations and political parties. The proportions of teachers actively engaged in sporting clubs and charitable groups have also remained static across this period. However, it would be misleading to couch the declining participation argument primarily in terms of the implications of individualism for contemporary society (Putnam 2000). There may well be economic and technological factors at play such as the high costs of contemporary living and the paradox of internet which connects people virtually, but isolates them from their immediate world simultaneously.

While civic participation may have declined in conventional spheres (for example, loyalty to institutions, joining political parties) there is some evidence to suggest that this change in 'community mindedness' may be more a matter of form than substance. Alternative forms of community building, social engagement and identity building are emerging among young people, such as different patterns of political involvement, volunteering and the use of the internet (Rainie and Horrigan 2005). Disaffection with political engagement in society is balanced by record levels of volunteering and community service by the young (Delli-Carpini and Keeter 1997).

However, shifts in patterns of both participation and leadership among young people need to be understood in terms of pervasive generational influences such as greater speed of change and corresponding expectations of rapid adaptation, stronger commitment to a balanced life and a weaker psychological contract with work and social institutions (Bennis and Thomas 2002). The unifying meta-theme for young people appears to be that 'relationships matter more than institutions' (Dempster and Lizzio 2007). Such generational factors shape young peoples' perceptions of appropriate leadership and strategies for political and community change. The key social challenge may not be so much that youth idealism is in decline rather it could be that local and relational forms of contribution favoured by young people do not translate into traditional structural forms of political or civic action (Sax 1999).

If we accept the argument that there have been shifts in patterns of both participation and leadership among young people, we need to consider the implications of this shift for learning, particularly in schools. MacBeath (2002) argues that leadership, teaching and learning are integrally connected. In his work on understanding the links between leadership and learning, MacBeath (2006a) suggests five interrelated key principles; (1) there must be a focus on learning; (2) conditions favourable to learning must be created; (3) leadership must be shared; (4) connections between leadership and learning must be explicit; and (5) accountability must be shared. MacBeath emphasises that maintaining and enhancing leadership structures and a learning culture are ongoing matters requiring continuous attention and that there can be no relaxation in efforts to connect leadership and learning.

There is some evidence to suggest that providing students with leadership opportunities and experiences may contribute to enhancing their connectedness with their school and therefore to improved engagement in learning. Dempster (2006) argues that collaborative leadership, social participation and responsibility help develop academic leadership enablers. Such experience also seems to help students develop the sort of socially involved and realistic self-assessment that motivates engagement and persistence. Leadership is seen as a central part in this. However, although student leadership activities should not be seen as a panacea for pedagogical ailments, there is some support for the proposition that experience of reasonable empowerment and a climate of participatory social engagement are known to· develop in students the very social, emotional and cognitive attributes that facilitate improvements in academic achievement. In this light, the development of student leadership has the potential to add value to schools through the inclusion of students as active citizens connected to and engaged with their learning community (Bickmore 2001).

Research has also shown that the link between leadership and learning can occur in wider community and recreational contexts. For example, Light (2006) argues that connections between learning and leadership can occur in a sports context. He employed Lave and Wenger's concepts of 'situated learning' and 'communities of practice' in a study of surf club members. Focusing on four adolescent key informants (2 boys, 2 girls, all aged 14), he conducted three extended semi-structured interviews (the third to understand how learning and membership in the club compared to these things in the school). He concluded that membership in the surf club from an early age involves highly significant and meaningful learning and identity formation and that membership can raise civic engagement. As previously indicated, this recognition is also supported by the belief that leadership has the potential to build social capital (Lambert 2005) thereby directing attention to the notion of civic engagement and responsibility (Putnam 1993).

Having outlined some of the broader societal reasons why a study of leadership amongst the young is important, we move now to suggest that this kind of research needs to be approached from the point of view of young people themselves. This is essential, we believe, because adult views of leadership dominate the myriad leadership training and development programmes now available within schools, sporting clubs and amongst community groups. Building on the above discussion, this chapter examines, from a young person's point of view, leadership and its links with learning, particularly as it applies to adolescents and their civic engagement.

Why Focus on the Views of Young People?

In broader society, the actions of young people in schools and communities are consistently under scrutiny. Indeed the ephebiphobic behaviour (a loathing of the young) in the media is fuelled by incidents such as loutish behaviour amongst adolescents in male sporting teams (Skinner 2005), poor self-discipline amongst secondary school students, bullying, harassment and substance abuse. These negative behaviours are rarely juxtaposed with accounts of positive social action or the leadership that can be exercised by young people. That leadership amongst the young is considered critical to future adult life, and community engagement is not contested. Indeed, leadership of self and others is the focus of a plethora of youth leadership programmes available in Australia and overseas. A systematic web site examination of a representative sample of current programmes reveals a number of important conceptual and methodological limitations. Most evident is the fact that current youth leadership programmes are founded on what are clearly adult conceptions of leadership (MacBeath 2004, cites 25 models of leadership in recent education literature). They are delivered in largely generic and de-contextualised training formats and are untested in terms of their efficacy and transfer of learning (Dempster and Lizzio 2007).

In recognising the complex phenomenon of youth leadership, Fielding (2004) and Cook-Sather (2006) argue that young people's perspectives have been poorly

represented in research to date. The lack of empirically based youth-centred perspectives on leadership in school and community contexts (Dial 2006; Komives et al. 2006; Posner 2004) has implications not only for a valid understanding of the construct, but also for the development of engaging, relevant and contextually appropriate methods for adolescent leadership development.

Early evidence suggests that youth and adult leadership may be separate phenomena. For example, in a participant–observer study of youth-based organisations (Roach 1999), young people were found to emphasise 'the group, the situation and the moment' and accordingly to value mutual, shifting and emerging types of leadership. Roach characterised this as 'wisdom in spontaneity' in contrast to the 'wisdom through experience' accounts of adult leaders. There are also striking parallels between these findings and the noted shift in leadership styles among Generation X and Y workers (Merrill Associates 2004). A potential emphasis on relational issues in young people's conceptions of leadership is also evident in a study of elected online forum leaders (aged 9–16) who typically adopted linguistic styles that focused on the needs of the group and did not engage in traditional leadership styles of contributing many ideas and using powerful language (Cassell et al. 2006). This pattern of findings also suggests the necessity of adopting a 'situated approach to understanding youth leadership'. As has been demonstrated in the social identity literature, leadership has to fit with the culture of the group and thus the facets of effective leaders will vary across groups and contexts (Reicher et al. 2008).

In a school context, how students understand leadership and how they see, experience and interpret it in different situations requires further investigation. There is little evidence that leadership is a concept that has been adequately described from the 'student's point of view' (Dempster and Lizzio 2007, p. 282). As indicated above, the vast majority of school practice applies the concepts of leadership as developed from adult contexts to adolescent and student experiences (Holdsworth 2005; Mitra 2005; Ricketts and Dudd 2002; Thomson and Holdsworth 2003). This lack of student-centred perspectives on leadership in school contexts has implications for school leaders and the wider educational community. Without these perspectives, developing ways that adults can foster youth participation and leadership in school reform efforts through students' engagement in the 'formal aspects of school life' (Mitra 2005, p. 524) is difficult.

The above discussion suggests that 'adolescents are a complex and acutely heterogeneous' (Whitehead 2009, pp. 860–861) group and 'effective leadership programmes must recognise that the adolescent agenda is dramatically different from the adult agenda' (p. 861). That difference has not been adequately described from the young person's perspective. Civic responsibility or civic engagement is better understood, but the linking of leadership with civic engagement appears as a gap beckoning systematic research. For example, the kinds of situations young people describe as those in which leadership for civic engagement is needed, or in which it actually occurs in schools or the wider community requires further research. What young people consider leadership actions in these situations is not apparent. Whether adolescent views of leadership are attached to issues of civic engagement either within the school or outside it, or to actions which are socially disengaging

is not known. This suggests that a single approach to understanding youth leadership would be limited. What is required 'is an investigation drawing on methodologies which recognise that leading and learning are inseparably integrated and that the contextual factors of the adolescent's world and culture' (Whitehead 2009, p. 861) need to be considered.

The timely and important nature of a focus on the leadership development of young people is reinforced by a range of educational agendas and accountabilities. Schools are increasingly being understood and led both as learning organisations and social communities. Thus contemporary school leadership involves continuous engagement with a network of partners (parents, students, etc.) around learning processes that focus on engaging 'whole students' from diverse backgrounds, motivations and identities. Meaningfully positioning 'students as partners' requires a grounded understanding of their leadership capabilities and potential contributions.

Student Leadership: Are There Benefits?

A large amount of leadership development has accompanied structural change in education systems (Neumann 2009). This has required schools to take on more responsibility for deciding what to do with the funds and other resources given to them through management devolution, as well as to address the greater level of input by local school community members in strategic decision-making processes. Additionally, schools are being encouraged to be leaders within their communities, thus allowing them to be involved in local activities and developments. In many cases this decentralisation of administrative functions is an effort to become more community responsive (Lingard et al. 1993; Neumann 2009).

Increasing the ability of students, parents, teachers and community members to participate authentically in school-based management structures and to engage more actively in initiatives that address their own interests is a powerful force to improve relevance and outcomes for students in the education process (Whitehead 2009). The restructuring of schools in many education systems (Louis 2003) has included grassroots initiatives with egalitarian partnerships between stakeholders (including students). Over two decades ago, White (1986) and Sarason (1986) argued that the absence of students from democratic processes in schools was a major impediment to school reform. They suggested that student empowerment is needed to extend into the organisational and strategic domains, that is, beyond just pedagogical considerations (Neumann 2009). Ekholm (2004) supports this concept of students sharing power by participating in decision-making processes and he suggests it is an essential component of their learning.

In the pursuit of this idea, educational researchers have given a high level of attention not only to schools as learning organisations, but also as social organisations, where interaction between participants can also influence the potential for students to learn and grow during the early parts of their lives (Bernstein 1977;

Grace 1995). The importance of developing learning environments in which the leadership development of young people can be enhanced is supported by a number of researchers (e,g., Astin 1984; Logue et al. 2005). These researchers suggest that leadership experiences can directly influence personal development and the richness of learning experiences. It is also suggested that there might be a number of factors that influence the quality and benefits of leadership experiences for those students who assume either a recognised role or contribute through out-of-class activities (Broh 2002; Gerber 1996; Kuh 1997; Kuh and Lund 1994; Terenzini et al. 1996). These factors include previous experience in leadership (Astin 1984), training (Cress et al. 2001), achievement orientation (Erwin and Marcus-Mendoza 1988) and gender (Whitt 1994).

Positive relationships between students and adults in the school community foster social belonging, which in turn fosters academic engagement (Connell and Wellborn 1991; Furrer and Skinner 2003; Wehlage et al. 1989). Smyth (2006), however, believes that students are becoming increasingly hostile to schools as places of learning as the learning environment is being shaped by accountability measures, standards and testing. Moreover, Smyth suggests although these demands appear to value student views, lives, culture, experiences and aspirations, they fail to do so. He suggests that this fosters a feeling of disempowerment and claims that schools have failed to create a sense of belonging for their students. He advocates that students should have an increasing voice in their school through active participation, input into the curriculum, control of some aspects of the school and leadership opportunities created by educational leaders who think differently.

Wallin (2003) argues that student involvement through leadership activities motivates students, develops initiative, and enhances creativity. She suggests that student leaders develop such social skills as goal setting, communicating, problem solving, planning, and evaluating through these experiences, especially in school environments where shared leadership is promoted. Further, she believes that student leadership opportunities also enable the development of interpersonal and communication skills as student leaders develop the skills to interact with others – students, parents and other adults – and influence the attitudes, opinions and actions of others. Wallin suggests that this has a positive effect on school spirit and attendance, and that student recognition is increased. Moreover, participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as sport at school, creates a higher level of engagement as these experiences involve the individual taking on the role of active citizen (Fielding 2004).

Despite the results of a number of research studies (Eley and Kirk 2002; Holt et al. 2008; Kay and Bradbury 2009; Macphail et al. 2003; Moran and Weiss 2006; Skille; 2007) into the positive contribution that sport can play in leadership development and active citizenship, Whitehead (2009) suggests that extra-curricular activities (e.g., involvement in sporting clubs/teams) will not necessarily provide sufficient leadership and citizenship development. Similarly, Lizzio et al. (2011) suggest that while extracurricular activities such as sport, may have the potential to strengthen connections with peer subgroups, engagement with sport does not create the same level of attachment to the school as a whole. It is the level of fit between

a school's culture and the values and norms of a peer group that may be a particularly important element in enhancing school identification. This clearly suggests that students' identification with their school is more powerfully facilitated by personal and/or cultural factors beyond participating in or belonging to formal groups or clubs. Their findings confirm Eccles and Barber (1999) conclusion that participation in extra-curricular activities more effectively enhances adolescent development when it generates positive peer networks.

The literature we have discussed highlights a number of benefits and problems, suggesting the need for a multifaceted approach to leadership development focussed on a range of formal and informal processes. How young people interact with their social systems and peers in their social ecology (e.g., family, school and neighbourhood) have been increasingly recognised as an important factor in shaping their development (Bronfenbrennor 1989). In other words, it is the sense of belonging or identification with one's school that may be an important element in enhancing the 'student citizenship and leadership' motivational pathway.

Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement: How It Should Be Studied?

In attempting to extend our knowledge of leadership as seen through the eyes of young people, the next step is to identify not only the ways in which schools better facilitate leadership motivation and capabilities in young people but also the understanding necessary for its association with civic engagement. Current work seeking to investigate the link between active citizenship and leadership is being undertaken by Dempster, Lizzo, Skinner, Andrews and Keeffe (2009–2011). Their ARC-funded study is examining youth leadership and its connection with civic engagement. It rests on the premise that schools are 'relational organisations' in which personal and interpersonal dynamics can influence students' learning, identity and behaviour (Smyth 2006).

The research will document what adolescents (14, 15 and 16 year olds) 'see' as leadership and the situations and circumstances in which they say leadership for civic engagement is evident. The key methodological challenge of the research is to design processes that optimise the likelihood of student 'voice' being heard while reducing or removing the chances of imposing adult-centric perspectives on young people's views of leadership and civic engagement.

The project consists of a number of cumulative studies. Young people's perceptions of leadership behaviours and situations will be documented in secondary schools and community sporting organisations (Nippers Lifesaving and Junior Rugby Union). This will be done using methods preferred by adolescents – methods which they say highlight their voices. Adolescents themselves will play a significant leading role in the analysis and interpretation of the data. The key outcome of the study is to develop new conceptual knowledge to inform youth-centric leadership interventions aimed at engaging young people in civic action in their communities.

We believe that in the long term, this kind of knowledge will help adolescents become productive Australian citizens.

Preliminary work has begun. The first stage (Study 1) was aimed at developing justifiable methods for eliciting adolescents' views. The study was designed to answer the question: *What valid youth-centred processes can be used to identify understandings of leadership and citizenship situations*? Panels of adolescents were engaged as co-researchers with the explicit aim of helping design methodologies that were both responsive to, and effective in, eliciting adolescent views. Four panels (6–8 members each) were convened to represent younger (male and female) and older (male and female) adolescents' perspectives. The panels were guided by co-facilitators chosen from young adults who had been student or community group leaders. Descriptions of leadership situations were raised by young people through a participative process involving open discussion protocols. This research programme is one of the first to approach the issues of leadership and civic engagement through young people's understandings of individual, peer and group-based challenges encountered in their social and organisational contexts. The programme is designed to address the key conceptual and methodological limitations in the current youth leadership and citizenship research directly. The primary theoretical contribution of the research will be the development of a rigorous student-centred and situated account of adolescent leadership and civic behaviour in school and community group settings.

Our preliminary findings show that young people are readily able to identify clusters of leadership attributes (Dempster et al. 2010). For young people, 'good' leadership amongst their peers is strongly related to pro-social attitudes and ethical behaviours. Thus, in the eyes of young people, their peers would be good leaders if they demonstrated care and consideration for colleagues by being inclusive, understanding, helpful, optimistic, selfless, patient and friendly. The adolescent leader who possessed such attributes would contribute to other young people feeling individually valued.

Ethically, good adolescent leaders would also be able to make decisions based on a sense of equality. They would know each person and see each situation in a non-judgemental way. They would accept that everyone is different but they are all on the same team or working towards the same goals. The good leader, like all members of the group, knows what is right and what is wrong.

For adolescents the good leader also has a shared sense of authority and works towards the group's common interests. Leaders model participative and cooperative behaviour for all members of the team. They are able to make their own fair decisions and are autonomous, responsible and independent. Similarly, the good leader also shows initiative and completes tasks without being told. In essence, the young people believed that the good leader could be anyone within the ranks of the group as long as he or she respected themselves, their elders, individuals and the nature or purpose of the group.

It is interesting to note the alternative attributes suggested by adolescents for 'bad' leaders. According to the young people in this study, the bad leader, like the good leader, is confident and strong. Unfortunately, the bad leader is also egocentric,
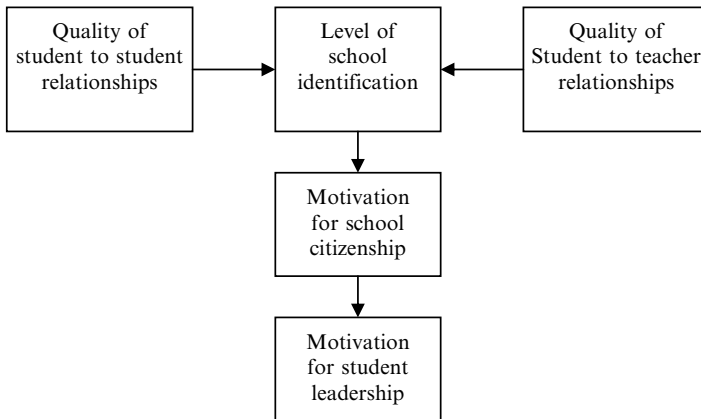
Fig. 46.1 Factors contributing to students' self-reported citizenship and leadership motivation

bossy and omnipotent. He/she makes the other team members feel degraded, stupid and isolated. The young people demonstrated a keen sense of understanding of stereotypical behaviour. From their perspective, the bad leader would manipulate an 'in group' that was polarised against the 'out group' to create competition and isolation. This divisive attribute belies the cohesive sense of belonging that is created by the good leader. It is interesting to note that the character type and the processes of manipulation that are contrived in bad leadership are clearly articulated in this study, albeit briefly, and as such, these perspectives deserve further consideration.

Another study in our research programme (Lizzio et al. 2011) has provided indicative evidence of the factors influencing the leadership and citizenship motivations and capabilities of young people. This study investigated the factors which influence high school students' motivations to engage in citizenship and leadership in their school. A sample of 167 Australian public school Grade 11 students (average age: 16.6 years) completed a self-report survey of their perceptions and motivations. Three propositions emerged from this research (Fig. 46.1).

First, the quality of peer relations appears to be most influential in shaping adolescent students' 'sense of school'. This finding is consistent with the general increased salience of peer relationships in adolescence, and confirms the specific finding that higher levels of peer support contribute to a sense of school membership (Isakson and Jarvis 1999). Second, teacher behaviour appears both directly and indirectly to influence students' experiences of their school. Students' perception of how they are treated by their teachers not only directly influences their sense of school identification and citizenship, but also indirectly appears to influence the quality of peer interactions. Clearly, teachers have a critical role in both modelling and establishing functional relationship norms for their students and their influence operates through both direct and indirect pathways. Finally, the motivations for student leadership appear to be reciprocal in nature. Students' willingness to contribute as citizens of their school appears related to the extent to which they are

treated well by teachers and peers. The psychological contract underpinning motivation for school citizenship and leadership requires that students experience at least a threshold value of fair and respectful treatment by teachers and peers. It would appear that the quality of the perceived interpersonal climate builds students' necessary sense of belonging and identification, which in turn facilitates school engagement. These findings support previous research that emphasise the importance of relational dimensions in understanding the student experience and its link with leadership and learning (Dempster 2006; Dempster and Johnson 2006; Dempster and Lizzio 2007; MacBeath 2006a; Neumann et al. 2009). In short, students may feel greater civic obligation towards their school if they feel respected by its leaders and regard it as 'our place'. In this sense, students' motivation to contribute and to help (civic participation) can be understood as a set of 'locally grown' behaviours and motivations (Lizzio et al. 2011).

We also wish to propose that just as student identification with school is associated with increasing the potential for student engagement, the extent to which teachers identify with their school may influence not only their own willingness to contribute, but also the extent to which they facilitate similar attitudes in their students. Interpersonal treatment by colleagues and school authorities strongly influence identification and engagement and this has clear implications for school leadership. A school culture that facilitates respects and support between teachers and administrators is arguably more likely to facilitate the civic identity and motivation of its staff. We argue that school leadership requires the operation of a virtuous cycle of mutual respect: if staff receive fair and respectful treatment they may be, in turn, more likely to treat students with respect and are more likely to model and encourage students' civic behaviour. Thus a fundamental component of school culture that facilitates student citizenship and leadership may well be the just interpersonal behaviour of its formal leadership team (Lizzio et al. 2011).

The Way Forward: Students as Leaders

The preceding discussion demonstrates the need for the development of youth/student leaders. The potential benefits of investing in this exist at individual and broader community levels. It could be suggested that students who assume leadership opportunities are engaging with learning experiences that will add to their growth as individuals and are likely to gain a better understanding of themselves, a higher level of confidence, and an increased capacity to manage and organise their own lives. They are also likely to develop processes and skills useful in their learning and more likely than not, will result in a deepening sense of their own maturity (Neumann et al. 2009). Moreover, Whitehead (2009) suggests that adolescent leadership development may be the key to a dramatic improvement in the high school affiliation experience and can perhaps play a role in breaking down social disadvantage. He argues that good leaders have the potential to 'enhance the quality of life and increase affiliation for their social group as a whole' (p. 867). At the broader

community level, Dempster et al. (2010) postulate that given the clear evidence that adolescents learn about their civic responsibilities best in circumstances close to them such as home, school or local community (Da Silva et al. 2004) leadership engagement may provide adolescents with the formative experiences needed to help them become productive citizens.

Both Dempster et al., (2010) and Whitehead (2009) would agree that more research is needed to help further our understanding of the kinds of situations young people believe leadership for learning and civic engagement occur. They would suggest that what actually occurs in schools or the wider community is unknown. For example, it is unclear what actions young people are prepared to suggest for enhancing leadership for learning and civic engagement. Moreover, the actions of leaders in these situations are not apparent and whether adolescent views of leadership are attached to issues of civic engagement either within the school or outside it, or to actions which are socially disengaging is not apparent. This would suggest that documenting youth's explanations of a situated understanding of leadership, and their views of what makes an effective citizen may be the forerunner of better student citizenship and enhanced civic engagement in the wider community.

Lizzio et al. (2011) identify a number of potential research directions for enhancing our understanding of leadership practice in schools. On a personal level better understanding is required of student motivation and at an institutional level, there is a need to explore how best to enhance the 'leadership capital' of the school. A broader view of student leadership and its capacity to enhance learning and foster a higher level of engagement within the school and the wider community is a focus researchers must embrace in the future. Ways to engage adolescents in society and to promote civic commitment through meaningful leadership experiences will be of interest to governments and community groups. Moreover, for educators, exploring the potential impact of leadership on students in their middle school years might foster a higher level of connectedness for this often disengaged group and it could help schools to develop youth leadership programmes beyond the classroom curriculum (Neumann 2009).

In conclusion, if we draw together the main threads in the preceding discussion, it is necessary to provide a grounded understanding of the meanings attached to leadership by adolescents and its association with learning. Research needs to systematically assess young people's leadership conceptions within a situational analysis framework. There is also an emerging pattern of findings in both Australian and international studies that provides a strong justification for a focus on civic engagement amongst adolescents. This is because the findings already show that the level of civic responsibility displayed during adolescence consistently predicts the levels of civic responsibility in adulthood (Reinders and Younis 2006). Clearly, then, there is a need to better understand how young people 'see' civic participation in action in the context of their daily lives. Finally, defining leadership from an adolescent perspective will help re-conceptualise approaches to youth leadership experience and learning for civic engagement. These issues are at the top of an overdue adolescent research agenda.

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Chapter 47
Promoting Students Learning Through Sustainable Innovations: Where Is the Missing Link?

Thuwayba Al-Barwani and Mohamed E. Osman

Introduction

Education systems all over the world have historically been the key to economic development and social mobility, and are currently becoming the focus of the knowledge-based economy. Inevitably, today's world economy is relying heavily on individuals who possess not only greater knowledge and technological expertise, but who can also create the next wave of innovations. However, given the global trend of demographic and economic changes, education systems find it very difficult to accommodate larger enrolments while encouraging more diversity in student populations and raising the quality of instruction. Chapman (2008) argues that the pressures introduced by globalisation, the rapid creation and dissemination of knowledge and the information and communication revolution are leading to intense demands on educational institutions to develop new structures and modes of operation. According to Luomi (2008) the importance of a balanced relationship between the supply of competitive and academically educated graduates and the corresponding demand in the market is well recognised in both the developed and developing world while concepts such as access, quality, relevance, equal opportunities, and lifelong learning are becoming almost universal aims for knowledge economies.

The World Bank, in its Flagship MENA[1] Development Report (The Road Not Traveled), accurately summarises the reform efforts embarked on in the region in the following statement:

> The modern history of education reform in the MENA region is a tale of brazen ambition, struggle against internal and external odds, unintended consequence, tactical error and success, accomplishment, and unfinished business. (World Bank 2008, p. 297)

It is also a story of the need to respond and comply with local and global pressures and the need to detach from age-old education traditions. The World Bank

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[1] Middle East and North African countries.

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further points out that although tremendous gains have been realised and past achievements have been impressive, an important gap still exists between the outputs of the education systems and the development goals that the region needs to achieve. The report further argues that past and ongoing reforms in the region tend to focus too heavily on engineering education and too little on motivating the actors involved and on enhancing public accountability (The World Bank 2008).

At the level of the universities in today's Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States, the interconnection between higher education and economic and social development can be clearly seen in their globalised higher education systems, with international partnerships dominating almost all new initiatives (Smith 2008). Some of the developments in education systems in the Gulf region, for example, have been a direct response to economic demands, whereas others are simply reactions to population increase and perceived learning needs. The higher education system in the GCC is increasingly developing through public and private sector engagement in order to meet the demands of its nationals, with the qualification that demotivated male students continue to seek alternatives to higher education while their female counterparts take greater advantage of educational opportunities, while continuing to face discrimination in the labour market (Bristol-Rhys 2008). However, irrespective of the need for improved access and equal opportunities, the higher education strategies in the Gulf countries all stress the need for quality assurance systems in both current and new initiatives. According to Al-Hamoud (2008), achieving globally competitive quality is the rationale for education reform efforts in the region, and for many of the partnerships established with international university partners, either as twin branches, or as different forms of joint venture.

Unlike many countries in the region, Oman's education system has been described as being 'massive, unprecedented and unparalleled by any other country' (The World Bank 2001 in Ministry of Education 2006). This is mainly because of the visionary leadership that transported the country from stagnation, from only three schools enrolling 900 male students in 1970, to a massive system of education of over 1,000 schools enrolling over 600,000 students (male and female) achieved in a short span of 40 years. However, in response to the issues of globalisation of the world economy, and government policy to promote Omanisation of the Sultanate's economy in order to reduce dependency on foreign labour, there has been a shift in emphasis from quantity to quality in education. Nonetheless, like any other sector, the education system usually struggles to keep up with the pace of societal change, because different constituencies may have different and conflicting interests even when all agree that the existing situation requires change. The consequences and degree of acceptability of educational innovations, thus, may vary significantly from students to teaching staff, the administration, policy makers, and the local communities.

The concept of innovation may be defined as an idea, practice or object that is perceived to be new by an individual or other unit of adoption (Rogers 2003). It can also be considered as an imaginative and responsive act to think out a different and potentially better way of doing something that has grown stale by custom and

tradition (Hargreaves 1999). In the education context the concept is defined as a dynamic process of assembling and maintaining a novel alignment of ideas, practices and individuals, in order to overcome a perceived crisis, problem, or a context-specific issue (Smith 2006). According to Shelton (2009) any innovation should be defined in terms of the results that it produces rather than the form it takes. In other words, an innovation is not necessarily something old or new, but rather it is something that is currently not used widely so as to help the target audience to perform better and faster. From these definitions it can be inferred that the main purpose of any educational innovation is usually to ensure that all students are able to benefit from well-designed and thoroughly tested best practices in a relatively similar context. However, although school systems are prone to change, they are not always good at transforming change into improved performance as required by the increasing demands from other sectors. Russo (2009) argues that calling a programme 'innovative' does not make it any more effective, affordable or scalable. The question, however, is not so much about which innovation is more sustainable than the other. It is rather, what are the attributes that make educational innovations more sustainable? It is important, therefore, that education innovations be based on a vision that brings together societal expectations and the work of policymakers, researchers, developers, and a collective expertise of practitioners. The following section highlights some of the main forces that drive the sustainability wheel of education innovations.

Sustainability of Educational Innovations: The Driving Forces

Previous research shows that the adoption of education innovations is usually a function of a set of interrelated factors that collectively have a significant impact on the conception, implementation, likelihood of success and sustainability of them (Assié-Lumumba 2004; Bereiter 2002; Rogers 2003; Silva and Sheppard 2001; Sharma 2005). According to Assié-Lumumba (2004), the diffusion and sustainability of innovations depend largely on the role of the individuals, groups, and the institutional units that introduce innovations and on the perception of beneficiaries; the method used to introduce the innovation; the actual presence and weight of external agencies; and the vision of the central political, administrative, and education authorities within the institution. If innovations are to flourish in schools, it is important that the mechanisms which can maintain the momentum and sustainability of these innovations be clearly understood. According to Silva and Sheppard (2001) sustainability of innovation occurs through creating a sense of community and ownership, by changing the existing culture, by enhancing and closing feedback loops, and by recognising the actions of one's peers through a public reward system. They further concluded that the role of leadership in adopting innovations in schools, the openness in both vertical and horizontal communication and establishing a wide network with individuals and institutions outside appeared to be crucial in sustaining educational innovations.

There are also a number of other factors that may contribute significantly to the sustainability of educational innovations such as coordinating with current institutional initiatives, obtaining and maintaining administrative support, securing needed resources, using promotion and marketing, institutionalising the adopted innovation, creating multi/interdisciplinary teams and networks, and involving both internal and external stakeholders who share the same vision, passion, and energies (Gabelnick et al. 1990; Silva and Sheppard 2001). In addition, Howard and Howard (2000) identified several other dimensions associated with progress towards sustainability. These include: accountability, decision making, information, knowledge and skills, and resource mobilisation. According to Schwartz (1994), sustainable change requires employee participation, training, provision of continuous feedback, a reward system, and development of group norms. The authors have summarised these requirements for sustainability in the Innovation Sustainability Wheel (ISW) (Fig. 47.1).

The ISW illustrates the main driving forces for sustaining educational innovations. Each of the main driving forces in the ISW is briefly described based on
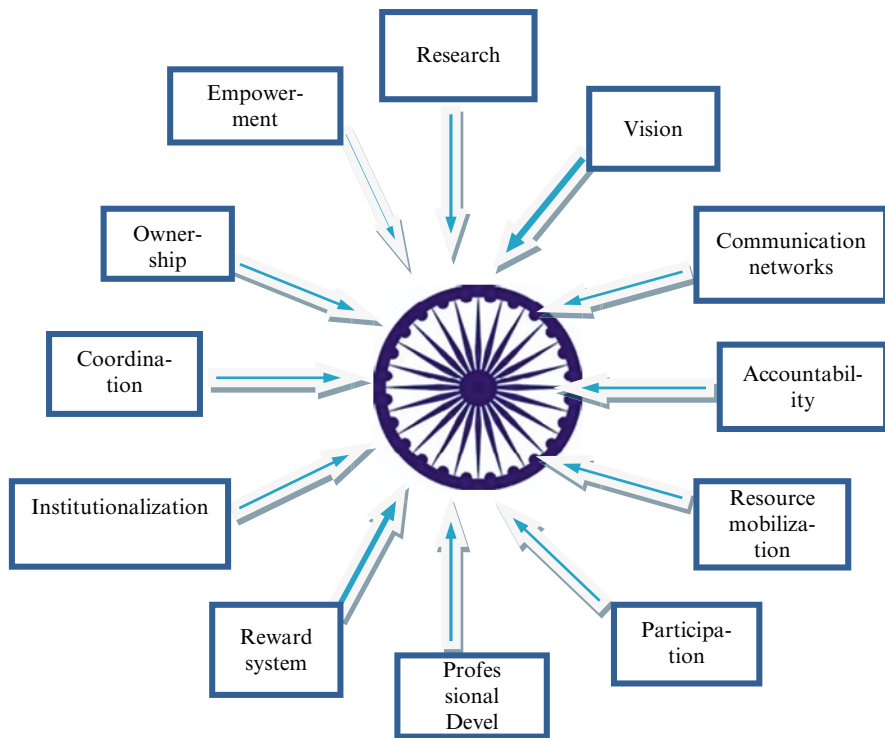
Fig. 47.1 Innovation sustainability wheel (ISW)

previous research, and in accordance with the context of the selected innovations to be analysed:

Vision: Vision here refers to a clear statement showing the alignment of the intended innovation with the overall vision of the education system, and how it could help the target audience perform better and faster in reaching that vision.

Communication networks: These refer to a social networking system that takes advantage of connectivity and information delivered or received primarily through wired or wireless networks capable of dynamic updating, storage, and sharing of knowledge and information.

Accountability: This refers to system-wide accountability and vertical integration of innovations so as to maintain the coherence of the whole system. This requires an integrated culture of self-evaluation and a continuous loop of evaluation and feedback that is directly linked to measurable outcomes and return on investment.

Resource mobilisation: This entails providing continuous support by reallocating available or attainable resources so that innovations do not deplete resources needed by other initiatives in the school system or have a negative impact on other schools by squandering valuable resources, and then disappear after funding ends.

Participation: This presupposes active and purposeful involvement of all stakeholders (policy makers, parents, teachers, and students), provided that they all work together while recognising the complementary role they play in the students' lives.

Professional development: This refers to an up-front training for all individuals involved and accessible opportunities to learn new skills as well as to unlearn beliefs about students or instruction that have dominated their professional careers.

Reward system: This refers to a system of incentives that range from the feeling of the professional and personal satisfaction that individuals may derive from seeing the positive impact their work was having on students' accomplishment, to a monetary reward system, perhaps linked to their promotion.

Institutionalisation: This refers to the administrative effort and commitment to make required changes in organisational structure, bylaws, and procedures that could stabilise the innovation.

Coordination: This could be described as managing efforts of all individuals involved in planning and implementing a particular innovation with shared goals and unified focus, or introducing a new innovation that reinforces, and works in harmony with other initiatives within the education system.

Ownership: Having a sense of community and ownership of the innovation through involving key players, in general, and implementers, particularly in decision making, and enhancing and closing the feedback loop.

Empowerment: This refers to providing innovation adopters with an adequate work environment, with opportunities to take initiative together with involving them in decision making so as to encourage a sense of responsibility for their own progress.

Research: Research in the ISW refers to evidence-based justifications for, and outcomes of, the innovation that involves the whole cycle of research–development–research (RDR).

For the purpose of this chapter, the ISW will be used as a tool to analyse the degree of fit and readiness of education innovations, and to identify the missing links that may impact the life span and potential sustainability of any innovation. The ISW may be described as a theoretical framework rooted in the theories of change, complexity theory (Davis 2008; Mason 2009) and the principles of diffusion of innovations (Rogers 2003). Complexity theory, for example, concerns itself with environments, organisations, or systems that are complex in the sense that very large numbers of interrelated constituent elements are connected to and interact with each other in various ways. In the context of the complexity of the educational environment, these constituent elements include teachers, students, parents and other community leaders, policy makers, economic structures, and business organisations (King 2009). On the basis of this theoretical framework, it can be argued that any sustainable change and development in education that promotes student learning is a function of a continuous momentum generated by many driving forces. The ISW framework has therefore been developed taking advantage of the theoretical framework, a combination of driving forces cited in the literature. It provides a useful mechanism for analysing the vulnerability or success of an educational innovation.

Educational Innovations in Oman: Promoting Student Learning

In response to the 'Vision for Oman's Economy-Oman: 2020' which stressed the importance of achieving well-developed human resources by the year 2020, the Ministry of Education (MOE) took serious steps to ensure that students would be adequately prepared for the requirements of higher education, the labour market, and modern life in general. Accordingly, the ministry planned major reforms, and introduced a number of innovative projects aimed at improving the quality of the school systems at all levels. However, little seems to have been done to examine the implementation and sustainability of the innovations adopted and their subsequent impact on promoting student learning. The purpose of this chapter is to systemically analyse some innovative projects and policy developments that promote student learning in the Sultanate of Oman and to address the sustainability of the innovations designed to promote students learning. The chapter also suggests a range of actions that can be taken to maintain the sustainability of these innovations.

As illustrated in Fig. 47.1, the main driving forces usually determine whether an innovation can migrate to the centre and become mainstream practice or fail to garner support and fade out accordingly. However, the challenge for educators and researchers is to precisely map the adoption process of any given innovation by examining the innovation cycle, and the driving forces that contribute to its sustainability. The following section highlights four educational innovations that were introduced by the MOE to promote student learning: The Basic Education System, Child-Centred Classroom Methodology (CCCM), the National Career Guidance Centre, and the Educational Portal.

Innovation 1: The Basic Education System

Due to the speed with which education had to be provided, the MOE found itself rushing to provide education to all children in all regions. This was a challenging task given the unavailability of proper school buildings, curricula, teaching staff, and administrative staff. Thus, the government resorted to makeshift schools, borrowed curricula, and outsourced teachers from neighbouring and friendly countries. Between 1970 and 1990, the concern was for enrolment, bussing, and opening of schools wherever they were required. Basically the concern was on quantity rather than quality of education provision.

Spurred by the challenges of globalisation and cognisance of the need to make education more responsive and relevant to the future needs of the Omani society, the government resolved to embark on comprehensive education reforms initiated in the 1990s. The conference Oman Vision 2020 which was held in Oman in 1995 outlined a vision for Oman's economic development, emphasising the following key elements:

- An efficient and competitive private sector
- A diversified and dynamic globalised economy
- Well-developed human resources
- Sustainable development within a stable macro-economic framework.

The conference recognised that the fundamental building block in the country's economic reform was education and that it was necessary that education reforms preceded any envisioned economic transformation. These reforms were expected to introduce both structural and pedagogical changes to the existing education system. Thus the priority of the 5th Five Year Development Plan (1996–2000) was 'to develop appropriate quality programmes to prepare citizens for the twenty-first century, including the introduction of Basic Education' (Ministry of Education 2006, p. 28). Consequently, this period witnessed a transformation in Oman's conceptualisation of education. A new era had begun where the focus was more on learning outcomes, competencies, learner centredness and relevance to the labour market.

Basic Education was initially introduced in the academic year 1998/1999 in 17 schools involving 14,000 students, 397 classes, 637 teachers, and 80 administrators (El Said and Al Salmi 2006). By 2004/2005, the number of Basic Education Schools had increased to 430 with close to 175,000 students in 11 regions of the Sultanate. It is important to note here that along with the gradual implementation of Basic Education, a large number of schools (608) were still implementing the General Education curriculum (the old curriculum). The MOE estimates that the last general education student cohort will graduate from secondary school in 2021/2022 (El Said and Al Salmi 2006).

Among the important features of this transformation is the changing concept of the learner. The basic education reform looked at the learner as a total human being who needs overall development. Thus, the Basic Education Reform focused on

developing seven major aspects of the learner namely: The Child, Islamic and Cultural Beliefs, Responsible Citizenship, Language, Learning and Attitudes, Technological Competence, and Aesthetic Appreciation and Expression. Derived from these main elements were the following general objectives:

- Develop the psychological and physical well-being of the learners in a balanced way to ensure the physical, cognitive, linguistic, social attention be given to the national, Arab, Islamic, and human identity of the learners.
- Develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others. Attention will be given to students' appreciation of the diversity of the world's people, cultures and ecosystems and their understanding and promotion of equity, justice and peace in their communities, Oman and the world.
- Develop a pride in the Arabic Language and their ability to use it accurately and fluently for a variety of purposes. Learners will also learn to communicate in the English language to broaden their outlook on the world and to prepare them for further studies.
- Develop positive attitudes to education, work, and helping others. Learners will be exposed to skills and language that will enable them to undertake all aspects of learning and scientific inquiry. They will develop higher-order thinking skills for scientific investigation and problem solving – both inside and outside schools. Students will also be provided with learning skills, strategies, and attitudes which will enable them to be independent and lifelong learners.
- Use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies to solve problems related to their daily lives.
- Respond with critical awareness to various forms of arts, and be able to participate in creative activities and expression (Ministry of Education 2009).

With this new focus on the learner, subsequent changes were introduced to the school curriculum. Developments aimed at making the curriculum more enjoyable and meaningful to the learner, providing continuous in-service training for teachers and administrators, and making the school more active and accessible. Other changes included: eliminating homeroom classes and replacing them with flying classes and replacing the classroom teacher with a subject area teacher (one for each of the three fields: Arabic and Islamic Studies, Mathematics and Science and English language).

Many other initiatives appeared as a result of this reform. Prominent among these are:

- Projects to transform the teaching and learning processes
- New curricula which stresses life skills and IT competencies
- Learning resource centres
- Professional development programmes involving teachers, supervisors, principals, and MOE personnel (El Said and Al Salmi 2006).

The past 12 years have witnessed a number of serious attempts at a departure from the traditional to the modern, from quantity to quality and from teacher focus to learner focus. However, a closer look at the performance of Oman's Basic Education System reveals that the elements of basic reform have run short of

delivering their intended outcomes. Investment in a longer school day and longer school year, better curricula with more focus on Science and Mathematics, more English, more technology and life skills, a more qualified teacher core, and a modern school infrastructure, have not produced an academically better student. This became evident in the underperformance of Omani students in the international assessment measures. Both the Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) results in Arabic, Mathematics, Science and Life Skills for grades 4, 6, and 9 and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) results for grade 8 students give a clear indication that despite the investment, Omani students were unable to perform according to expected standards (UNESCO 2000, 2007). For example, TIMSS's data from 2007 shows that the average score for Omani 8th Grade students in science was 423 on the TIMSS scale average of 500. On the other hand, 'The EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Report' in Oman indicates that the performance of Omani students on MLA measure administered to grades 4, 6, and 9 students in Arabic, Math, Science, and Life Skills is equally poor. For example, with regard to grade 4, a two-stage stratified sample of 71 schools and 2,210 students were selected from a national population of 658 schools with grade 4 classes and 44,409 grade 4 students. The overall mean achievement in Arabic, science, mathematics, and life skills is reported in Table 47.1.

As can be seen from the table, grade 4 students' performance was lower than expected and the same applied to the other levels tested. MLA assessment means were also administered to Omani students in 2007. While the results have not yet been publicly disseminated, there is enough evidence to indicate that there is no dramatic departure from previously reported results.

Besides poor performance in international assessment measures, the inadequate performance of the education system was further confirmed by the results of the national evaluation of the Basic Education Reform commissioned by the MOE and conducted by an external international agency (the Canadcom. Int). Coupled with this, high dropout rates, inability of high school diploma graduates to find jobs in the Omani labour market, and low performance standards in tertiary education have collectively contributed to drawing the attention of policy makers, legislative bodies and civil society to the importance of focusing on the quality and relevance of learning that is taking place in the schools. The World Bank's report, 'The Road not Travelled', analysed the performance of education in the MENA region and they found that though a lot of money was invested in education, the money invested was not making a direct contribution to student learning.

Table 47.1 Grade 4 students' achievement in Arabic language, mathematics, science, and life skills (N = 2,210; male = 1,112; female = 1,098)

Subject	% correct mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Lower 10%		Upper 10%	
				Min	Max	Min	Max
Arabic	57.3	20.2	0.43	0	31.3	86.6	100
Science	48.5	18.2	0.39	10.4	22.9	75	37.9
Mathematics	54.3	16.3	0.35	10	32.5	77.5	100
Life skills	48.3	16.4	0.35	10.2	28.6	71.4	93.9

Where Is the Missing Link?

Essentially, Basic Education was introduced as an innovation to promote students' learning and development. However, based on the available performance indicators, the impact and future sustainability of this innovation is questionable. In order to answer this question, one needs to do a systemic analysis of the reform process in the light of a specific theoretical framework. This will allow the isolation of subsequent processes and components for the purpose of assessing them against the said framework. Thus, for the purpose of this chapter, components of the ISW will be used as the criteria for analysis and assessment. Each process of the Basic Education reform will be analysed against the components of the ISW.

In general, one can confidently say that many of the driving forces identified by the ISW may be recognised as salient features of the Basic Education Reform. A good example is the vision, and goals of the Basic Education reform that were articulated to all stakeholders prior to the implementation of the reform. The public awareness campaign took the form of workshops, seminars, conferences, local media, and public debates. Communication networks were created and the Ministry sought to involve the family and civil society as partners in the implementation of this reform.

Considering that this innovation has been around for more than 10 years, one might anticipate that there would be a series of research studies and a continuous feedback loop at various phases and levels of implementation that could be linked to measurable performance of the interrelated elements of the systems. Perhaps the absence of a built-in research cycle (research–development–research) is the key missing link. Even the few and infrequent research studies that have been conducted have focused primarily on the general outcomes of the system, rather than on the processes and performance of the interrelated elements of the subsystems. Similarly, the accountability process has not been built into the system. It is still a top-down process in which the MoE monitors and evaluates the performance of the students as well as the implementers. Accordingly, the accountability factor may be described as being a weak driving force for this innovation.

As mentioned earlier, a lot of efforts have been expended to instil the values of ownership among stakeholders. However, some of the influential players joined very late at the implementation phase, and were not involved in the initial debate when the goals and roles were determined. As a result, the 'ownership' factor has not been a strong driving force in the sustainability wheel for Basic Education. In addition, the Reward System, since it is a legislative issue, has not been built into the system and linked to teacher productivity and student learning. Instead, most teachers consider this reform and other related innovations, as an extra burden. Justifiably, this particular innovation requires more effort, time, and commitment on the part of the teacher. In addition, Omani schools do not have teaching assistants, and class size has not been reduced to a level where the teacher can be freed to focus more on activities that serve to promote student learning and overall development.

Another factor that has also not acted as a strong driving force is the 'empowerment' factor. Teachers, for example, as frontline practitioners were not given

enough room to introduce initiatives and to offer creative suggestions. In other words, they were empowered with only the technical tools to do their jobs, but not with opportunities to make implementation decisions on their own at the individual level. Thus, decision making continues to remain essentially centralised.

Professional development of school and administrative personnel has been an integral part of the basic education reform. It has taken the form of continuous training programmes and workshops. However, it appears that the scope of training and professional development was very much limited to the technical 'know how' of delivering instruction. In order for the professional development to be a strong driving force for change, it is important that the training programmes pay more attention to the overall values and philosophical bases of the reform initiative, and more importantly, the change of culture and tacit beliefs of teachers who implement the reform.

Resource mobilisation has also been considered and attention has been given to the provisions of all infrastructural requirements for the reform. This is clearly evident in the government commitment and huge investment in new school infrastructure, computer laboratories, networks etc. However, it appears that a large portion of available resources have been allocated to the engineering part of the educational process. This may have depleted resources that could have been used to improve the performance of other elements of the system which have a more direct impact on student learning.

With regard to the institutionalisation factor, this innovation can be said to have been largely institutionalised. However, there was no systemic change in the administrative and organisational structure of the education system. There are significant parts of the old system that continue to operate as deterrent forces. It is imperative, therefore, to legislate separate by-laws and procedures that can improve the efficiency of the reform initiative in promoting students' learning. Similarly, with reference to the ISW, the coordination factor is considered at two levels: the first level entails involvement of all individuals in planning and implementing a particular innovation with shared goals and unified focus. For the interim purpose, this seems to have been satisfactorily implemented. As for the second level, concerned with coordination between different initiatives and the harmonising of these initiatives, it appears that this innovation continues to compete with many other parallel initiatives.

Innovation 2: Child-Centred Classroom Methodology (CCCM)

To enhance the Basic Education Reform, other innovations were implemented. Among the most prominent is the CCCM which was introduced on an experimental basis in 2003. This initiative was supported by funds provided by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).[2]

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[2] Middle East Partnership Initiative is a funding agency that operates to support social, economic, and political programmes in the MENA region.

This project was designed to introduce new, active teaching, and learning methods and also designed to support family involvement in their children's learning. The long-term purpose of the project was to inculcate democratic principles among learners. The new methods were designed to encourage learners to make choices, take responsibility for their decisions and actions, express their ideas, respect individual differences, and develop critical thinking skills and to practice independent thinking. Above all, the project was expected to support education reform that promotes responsible citizenry at both the learner and community levels. The CCCM[3] project was implemented in grades 1–4 of Cycle 1 schools.

In the first phase of implementation, CCCM was introduced to grades 1 and 2 only of Basic Education. After 2 years, the project was being implemented in 20 schools and 171 classrooms located in Muscat, Al Batinah South, Al Sharqiya North, and Al Dakhliya regions. The pedagogical model followed is one that adheres to the philosophy, principles, and practices of active learning. The main objectives of the project may be summarised as follows:

• To introduce new and different approaches to classroom teaching and learning.
• To provide support to the involvement of parents and the community in the school
• To design instructional methods that encourages children to make choices in planned activities.
• To prepare children to take responsibility for their decisions, express ideas, respect individual differences, develop critical thinking skills and practice independent working and thinking (El Said and Al Salmi 2006).

In 2004, the project provided training for 96 grade one teachers, administrators, and supervisors. The training covered areas such as: morning meetings, story reading and role play, learning centres, involving parents in classrooms as teacher aides, homeroom classes, classroom rules and student classroom duties and responsibilities. At the end of 2004, the project coordinators conducted classroom observations and follow-up training for 52 grade one teachers and administrators and in June 2005, 500 more teachers were trained.

Where Is the Missing Link?

Although the CCCM is theoretically sound and grounded in both learning and instructional theories (Case 1996; Donaldson 1996; Gardner 1991), it was introduced on an experimental basis, not as an integrated innovation within the Basic Education reform initiative. Thus, it lacks a clear vision as an important driving force. As indicated earlier, innovations should be based on a vision that binds societal expectations, researchers, and a collective expertise of practitioners.

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[3]The Omani System of Education operates at two cycles. The first covers grades 1–10 and the other is grades 11–12.

In addition, a number of other driving forces such as communication networks, participation, ownership, and coordination may be considered as either weak or missing links in this innovation. For example, the initial implementation was not based on a rigorous front-end analysis that takes into consideration the readiness of other interrelated elements of the system. It appears that the scope of the research is limited to the impact of the experiment on a small implementation scale rather than a complete research cycle from needs assessment to overall impact.

Unlike the Basic Education reform, for example, local communities and the selected schools were involved only during the implementation and training phases. In addition, the training and professional development was limited to only the teachers who were involved in the implementation of the CCCM experiment in the selected experimental schools, and seen in many cases as yet another additional burden to those teachers. Accordingly, other important driving forces in the ISW such as ownership, reward system, and participation may have been undermined. More importantly, both the resource mobilisation and institutionalisation have not been strong driving forces for this particular innovation. Because the support and resources allocated for the development and implementation of the CCCM were provided by an external funding agency (MEPI), its sustainability may very well be short-lived once the external funding stops. Therefore, one would expect that the project may not get favourable funding support once the funding agency withdraws.

Innovation 3: The National Career Guidance Initiative (NCG)

The third innovation discussed in this paper is the National Career Guidance initiative. The NCG was established in 2003 for the purpose of organising the Career Guidance Initiative, develop its implementation plan, required materials and conduct professional programmes for teachers and administrators. The centre was developed to implement this initiative and strives to be a distinguished leading player in the area of career guidance and relevant services and consultancies to the society. The main goals of the NCGC include:

- Disseminating information on the importance of career guidance and its associated operations to all stakeholders including policy makers, parents, teachers, and students.
- Providing career guidance services for all members of Omani society from students to job seekers to help them enter professions and choose jobs that are suitable to their abilities in keeping with the requirements of the national economy and the Omani labour market.
- Providing guidance and training specialists in each school who can help students in the smooth transition from basic school education to higher education or training institutions or the labour market, and help them make informed decisions and choices when planning careers or applying for admission in higher learning.

- Developing plans and programmes for vocational guidance and training involving relevant categories of students, teachers, specialists, and all other stake holders (MOE 2010).

The NCG initiative has 1,173 career guidance specialists distributed over 11 regions and governorates, with one or two Career Guidance Specialists in each school, serving students from grades 5–12. The centre provides central training as well as regional workshops for master trainers and specialists. A number of publications have been produced for both teachers and students. An example of these publications include an assessment tool for students *Career Interests & Personality Traits Activi*ty and a student book *Your Career Pathway* for grades 10, 11, and 12. The content of the student book covers a wide range of topics such as decision making, self-confidence, work ethic, voluntary work, national manpower register, paths to higher education, university life, entrepreneurship, successful presentation skills, and career portfolio.

The NCGC has many divisions and departments that collaborate in the provision of the services. Figure 47.2 illustrates the organisational structure of the centre and shows the level of institutionalisation.

Where Is the Missing Link?

Similar to the Basic Education initiative, the vision and mission of the NCGC was linked directly to Oman Vision 2020 for the purpose of coordinating the strategic planning efforts of the MOE and other related ministries and sectors involved in human resource development. The Oman Vision 2020 emphasises the need for education that is fit for purpose and relevant to labour market priorities. However, from a strategic point of view, the centre may be running short of reaching its vision with respect to instilling the values of decision making and work ethic at an early stage in the school system. In addition, being driven by the labour market, career guidance may have a negative impact on the ultimate goal of schooling which is expected to contribute to balanced social development. Perhaps, the strongest driving force of the NCGC is its institutionalisation from the top-down levels of the organisational structure, where administrative effort and commitment to make required changes in by-laws, and procedures can be secured.

As illustrated in Fig. 47.2, the centre reports directly to the highest decision-making body in the MOE. As a result, participation and resource mobilisation factors play a significant role in the diffusion of this innovation.

This can also be linked to the professional development factor which goes beyond the in-service training programmes of teachers, to their accessibility to opportunities for a professional postgraduate studies in career guidance. The postgraduate diploma may be seen as a built-in reward system for the specialists involved.
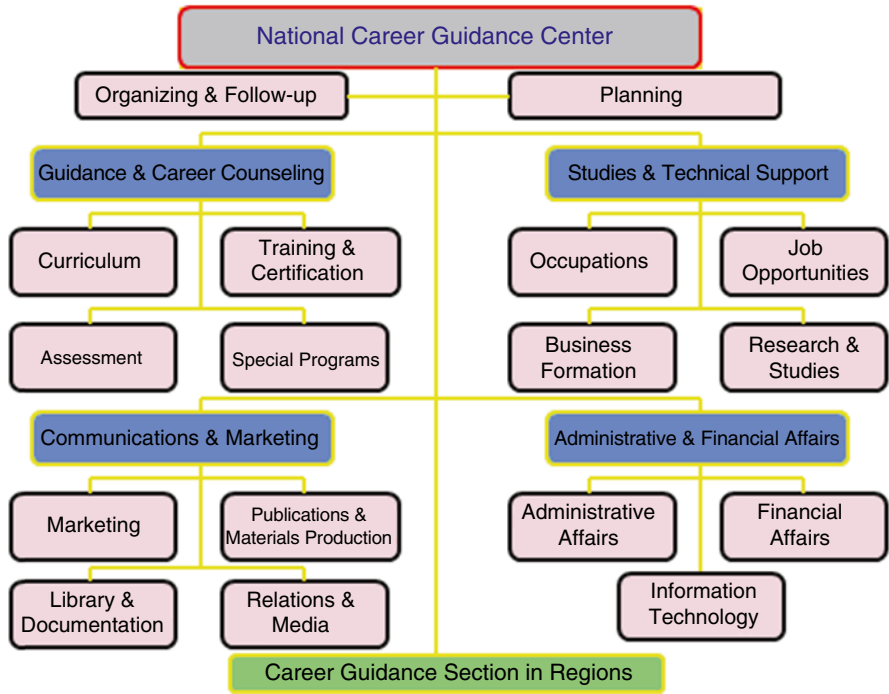
Fig. 47.2 The organisational structure of the NCGC

In addition, the selection process may also be considered as a lucrative incentive in which judiciously selected teachers are given an opportunity for career change. Moreover, the NCGC supplied schools and career guidance specialists with the necessary manuals and data bases needed to guide students in their career paths. However, career guidance is obviously a shared responsibility between the home and school, and thus, parental involvement becomes an essential element in this process. It is important, therefore, that the training programmes be extended to cover parents and local communities.

The NCGC also appears to be working in harmony with and reinforcing other related initiatives within the education system such as the Central Admissions Office, and the CCCM initiative which also focuses on student aptitudes and attitudes. It is anticipated that involving students in decision-making processes in the early years of schooling will positively impact on their motivation to learn and subsequently on their academic performance. However, research has yet to prove that the career guidance provided, or the choices made by students, have an impact on their performance and future career choices. The most obvious missing link in the ISW for this innovation is the absence of research as an important driving force. It is imperative, therefore, to embed a complete research cycle (R–D–R) within the innovation adoption process.

Innovation 4: The Educational Portal

The advent of information and communication technologies has inevitably redefined the education model for all learners, teachers, parents, and policy makers. There are currently more powerful ways and tools to connect people in schools and local communities to each other, and to the outside world (Nelson and Kellogg 2006). Obviously, schools are becoming learning havens for teachers, students, and other concerned stakeholders in their local communities. Wireless networking, for example, provides learners with the opportunity to connect with colleagues and instructors via online resources from a much broader variety of places than what is accessible via traditional wired connections. This shift in learning locations and learner access to information has been driven both by learners' demands and by advances in technology that make mobile technology access a practical option for the average person (Frohberg 2006).

Educational portals, in general, are emerging as a viable option for exploiting communication technology, taking advantage of connectivity and information delivered or received primarily through wired or wireless networks, capable of dynamic updating, storage, and sharing of knowledge and information. This produces a functional framework definition for educational portals in terms of users, location, time, learning and training approaches, and delivery logistics. Accordingly, the main purpose of educational portals is to create connectivity between people and information, and provide opportunities for shared cognition and social learning approaches. It is anticipated that the introduction of the e-portal in education systems will give a strong impulse to the integration of information technology into education. The education portal provides dynamic education opportunities where the community of students, teachers, administrators, policy makers, and parents become a connected set of valuable resources. Research shows that when teachers participate in online communities of learners and professionals they are more likely to integrate Information and Communications Technology literacy into classroom instruction (Wenger 1998). In addition, the education portal fosters a sustainable nation – generating a momentum towards shared educational goals, and an efficient communication and data driven decision-making across all concerned groups in the community. These connected communities may be able to accomplish goals that would be impossible through individual efforts. However, all involved stakeholders need to be clear about the goals, objectives, and expected impact of the e-portal.

The education portal in Oman is an innovative educational initiative launched in September 2007. The portal serves as a link between all educational elements, using a group of programmes and several web-based services aimed at facilitating the educational process and presenting it in an effective and attractive manner for all community members involved in the education system. It also facilitates the observation and communication process of the educational elements. In addition, it helps in organising and monitoring the administrative work through a number of systems such as electronic requests and document archives.

The e-portal offers two types of services: free access services available for any visitor and special service limited to users with account numbers and passwords.
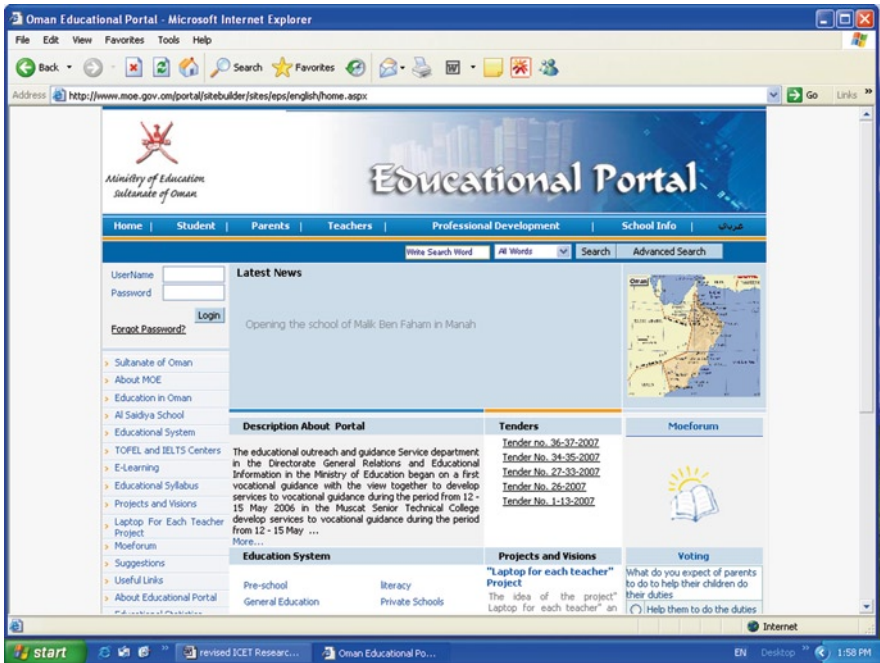
Fig. 47.3 The general home page of the e-portal

Examples of free access service include: threads follow-up, newsletters, general information, search services, voting, advertising, guide, articles, and news. The restricted service (Fig. 47.3) includes e-content, instructional packages, chatting services, short messages, interactive voice response, sending fax electronically, and mobile services. In addition, it offers specialised electronic services such as the school administrative system, learning management systems, and document archives and messages. These systems provide the portal users (administrators, teachers, students, and parents) with a variety of services such as school timetable, exam timetable, exam seat numbers, exam halls, certificate of good conduct, citizenship certificate, students reports of latency and absence, evaluation reports, forums and chatting, digital text and e-books, e-learning resources, statistics, student performance reports, fax services, and mobile services, among others.

Where Is the Missing Link?

Given the fact that a number of government and private sector organisations are transforming their operating systems into electronic systems, this particular innovation seems to be gaining momentum and is increasingly becoming mainstream practice. The main driving forces for the relative sustainability of the e-portal appear to be its alignment with the government vision of transforming Omani society into

a digital society. The Sultanate of Oman has embarked upon an ambitious plan for transforming Oman by empowering its people, through the e-Oman initiative. The vision of the Information Technology Authority (ITA 2010), for example, states that:

> ITA works with a vision to transform the Sultanate of Oman into a sustainable Knowledge Society by leveraging Information and Communication Technologies to enhance government services, enrich businesses and empower individuals. (http://www.ita.gov.om/ITAPortal)

It is possible to assume that the ITA initiatives and investment in e-technology have played a pivotal role in sustaining the momentum of the Educational Portal. In addition, the MOE has undertaken several projects aimed at improving communication networks and empowering its employees with the required digital literacy and higher levels of competence through training programmes and workshops.

The e-portal itself has been used as a platform for professional development through the available open sources and discussion forums. As an important driving force, professional development appears to be limited to the designers and developers and not the main users in places where the innovation is needed. Evidently, e-portal communication tools have created a number of communities of learners and various discussion forums for example, teachers, students, and supervisors at different levels and from different disciplines. However, there is a clear lack of guidance for the purpose and roles of these communities that can be tangibly linked to students' learning. In addition, these communication networks require an effective infrastructure able to harness information and communication technologies so as to provide and improve educational services. Another driving force that appears to be partially in place is in the form of allocated and mobilised resources. The MOE allocated significant resources to the hardware and software, and the supporting human resources. However, the current network infrastructure does not provide nation-wide support for utilising the services provided by the e-portal. This will likely hinder the sustainability of this educational innovation. In addition, it seems that a significant portion of the resources has been allocated to the technical infrastructure (that is, hardware and software), and less to resources intended to promote student learning.

As one of its strategic goals for institutionalising the e-portal, the MOE established a directorate with specialised devoted units within the Ministry and within different regions designed to provide and maintain the requisite technical support for all users. In addition, these units are currently providing professional leadership to various e-system initiatives. However, its current existence appears to be at the higher technical level providing only administrative and maintenance support. This can be directly linked to the ownership and accountability factors, in which a small number of individuals who have the technical knowledge bear the responsibility for sustaining the innovation, while the role of the primary users is limited to the utilisation of the communication services. For a system-wide adoption of this innovation, it is important that all concerned parties (that is, policy makers, administrators, teachers, and parents) are able to assess the value of the innovation on students' learning. The main missing link in the e-portal as an educational innovation may

prove to be a lack of research-based evidence as to the impact of the e-portal in improving the efficiency of educational services, enhancing the school activities, and empowering teachers and students with the skills and knowledge which enhance student learning and consequently lead Oman to achieve its long-term goal of becoming a sustainable knowledge-based economy.

Conclusion

Given its sound theoretical base, the ISW framework may be used not only as a research tool for analysing the potential sustainability of any education innovation, but also as a checklist for proactive planning and diffusion of new initiatives. Based on the ISW, it may be concluded that the selected innovations tend to focus more on engineering education rather than motivating all actors involved with a clear shared vision of promoting student learning. The driving force of the research cycle (R–D–R) appears to be the weakest link in all innovations studied. These innovations appear to lack either evidence-based rationale, or a rigorous assessment of their impact on the intended outcomes. In order for any education innovation to gain a continuous momentum and transfer to the main stream of practice, and able to promote student learning, it is imperative that the whole research cycle be activated. In other words, empirical evidence needs to be collected not only at the summative evaluation phase, but also at both the front-end analysis and implementation phases. In the case of the basic education system initiative, for example, systemic research needs to be conducted to investigate the performance of all interrelated elements (e.g., teacher's performance, quality of curriculum, learning environments, evaluation system, resources, training programs, etc.) in relation to well-defined student learning outcomes.

It appears that sustainable development in student learning is not so much a consequence of effecting change in one element or a subsystem, but rather a case of generating systemic momentum by paying attention to all interrelated driving forces. Research has shown that the key to the adoption and sustainability of educational innovations that promote student learning are the teachers and their commitment and readiness to take part. It is important, therefore, to involve teachers in all phases of the innovation cycle, ensure ownership and empower them with the required tools, professional development, and opportunities to make decisions and develop their own initiatives. It is crucial that teachers and other stakeholders see a direct and clear connection between a specific innovation and student learning outcomes.

With regard to externally funded educational innovations, their success seems to rely on the extent to which they are contextualised and appropriated by the target-audience to fit perceived needs. It is important to note that education innovations that may have better chances for sustainability are those that strive to create bridges and mutually reinforcing contributions to meet local needs within a global system and at the same time activate all the other driving forces.

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Chapter 48
Creating Participative Learning Cultures Through Student Leadership

David Frost

For some considerable time now we have been aware of evidence from school effectiveness studies that tells us that leadership impacts on school effectiveness (Sammons et al. 1995). Since the publication of the Sammons et al. review prepared for Ofsted in the UK, researchers in various parts of the world have made further efforts to establish clear correlations between leadership and student achievement (e.g. Hallinger and Heck 1996; Silins and Mulford 2003; Leithwood et al. 2004) and some have attempted to measure the relative impact of principal leadership and teacher leadership (e.g. Leithwood and Jantzi 2000). However, student leadership, if judged by means of the kind of research used by those listed above, is as yet a bit of an unknown quantity. Nonetheless I want to argue here that it is a vital dimension of both the improving school and the effective school. I do not try to demonstrate a causal link between student leadership and the usual measures of student achievement, not just because the evidence is unavailable, but also because it would be specious. The analysis offered here is theoretical and supported by evidence from qualitative research and accounts of development.

This chapter begins with an exploration of the idea of distributed leadership and then draws on material arising from two research projects: the 'Influence and Participation of Young People in their Learning' (IPiL) project (MacBeath et al. 2008) and the 'Evaluation of the Learning to Lead Initiative' (ELLI) to discuss the strategies that schools can use to enable students of all ages to exercise leadership and become full partners in the enterprise of learning (Frost and MacBeath 2010; Frost and Stenton 2010).

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Distributed Leadership and Student Leadership

The discussion about student leadership is part of a wider development of what has been variously termed 'shared leadership' (MacBeath et al. 2006), 'parallel leadership' (Crowther et al. 2002), 'collective leadership' (Hughes 2005; Lumby 2009) and 'dispersed leadership' (Ray et al. 2003). While recognising that there are distinctions between these terms, I nevertheless focus on distributed leadership as a shorthand for all of the above.

Distributed leadership is a sign of the times, argues David Hartley (2007). It reflects prevailing cultural and economic trends. The shift towards a knowledge economy means that Fordist managerialism and the dominance of bureaucratic structures are perforce giving ground to softer forms of organisational life. Contemporary organisational forms are hybrids in which bureaucratic structures are dormant. They are more inclined to recognise the emotionality of organisational members; they focus on the cultivation of the 'learning worker' who can act independently and is willing to engage in self-review.

> Independent work that relies on solidarity, respect or mutual trust is poorly served by bureaucratic structures that create authority differences (Biggart 1989: 169–170 in Hartley 2007: 208).

Distributed leadership is perhaps commonplace in both the academic and professional discourses but, in spite of its currency, research in the field is hampered by 'conceptual elasticity' and 'little evidence of a direct causal relationship between distributed leadership and school improvement'. (Hartley 2007: 202).

The concept of distributed leadership is certainly slippery. It is generally seen as being in opposition to the traditional 'heroic leadership' model which assumes that the chief executive in an organisation retains the authority to decide and act on behalf of the rest of the organisation. Distributed leadership on the other hand is a perspective which recognises that leadership involves collaborative and interactive behaviour through which organisations are maintained, problems are solved and practice is developed (Gronn 2000, 2002; Spillane et al. 2004; Spillane 2006). In a recent survey-based study, Heck and Hallinger (2009) focused on the extent to which school leadership enables teachers to participate in decision making and express their concerns to administrators as well as the extent to which parents have opportunities to participate in decisions about their children's education. Their construct also features 'opportunities for all stakeholders to review the school's vision and purpose' (p. 670). Students, however, were not mentioned specifically. One conceptual problem is that while some researchers (e.g. Spillane 2006) might see distributed leadership as a perspective – a lens through which to observe the way things get done in schools – many practitioners talk of distributed leadership as a strategy for sharing the management workload or as a strategy for culture building.

The second of Hartley's observations mentioned above is that there is little evidence that distributed leadership works. Recently, school effectiveness research has begun to focus on the assessment of the effects of distributed leadership.

An account of research by Leithwood and Mascall (2008) for example reports a link between 'collective leadership' and high achievement. Similarly Heck and Hallinger (2009) report a positive relationship between distributed leadership, capacity building and student outcomes. There is a major question here about what counts as evidence of course. There may be only a few studies which have sampled schools and established positive correlations between measured attainment and leadership practices described as 'distributed', but there is nevertheless a wealth of evidence of a more qualitative nature that testifies to the way shared leadership is an essential dimension of the building of organisational capacity. It is the belief in the value of measuring the effect of distributed leadership that is fundamentally misguided. If it is reasonable to argue that distributed leadership is likely to build organisational capacity, we need to find ways to investigate how capacity actually develops. Arguably, 'capacity building' is the key defining characteristic of the improving school (MacBeath et al. 2006; Mitchell and Sackney 2000; Gray et al. 1999). Capacity building is about developing a professional culture in which self-evaluation, innovation and improvement are valued and operationalised such that the school has the capacity to change and improve itself (Lambert 1998). Capacity building entails the mobilisation and enhancement of both intellectual and social capital (Hargreaves 2003) so as to create a powerful engine for transformation. Leadership is key to capacity building, and this has been underscored time and again by policy makers and researchers (e.g. Sammons et al. 1995).

In spite of breakthroughs in practice and theoretical understanding, narrow conceptions of school leadership still persist and colour the way we see distributed leadership. The influence of structuralist organisational science is outmoded (Ball 1987), but nevertheless its legacy of assumptions continues to support the belief that leadership requires the kind of authority that flows from a designated position in the organisational hierarchy. If beliefs about leadership lead to a perspective that is *leader*-focused (position or role-based leadership) rather than *leadership*-focused – there is a serious obstacle to the cultivation of shared leadership. The language chosen – in particular the constant use of the word 'leader' – is inhibiting and reinforces the assumption that it is about special people with particular role designations and authority bestowed by officialdom.

Leaderful Communities and Student Leadership

An alternative way of talking about distributed leadership focuses more on the function of leadership than on the roles that are often assumed to facilitate it. Raelin (2003) promotes the concept of 'leaderful practice' which throws the spotlight on the idea that all members of an organisation have something to contribute. The idea of schools as 'leaderful communities' is one which might be productive in thinking about how organisational capacity can be maximised. The concept of leaderful practice corresponds to some extent with that of 'leadership density' (Sergiovanni 1992) which refers to the extent to which members of a learning community take

responsibility for quality and effectiveness. Again this may have the benefit of liberating us from the ambiguity of the 'distributed leadership' terminology. Sergiovanni argues that a successful school is one in which the maximum degree of leadership is exercised by the maximum number of people including teachers, pupils, parents, support staff and so on (Sergiovanni 1992). High leadership density can be said to found when many people are involved in:

- influencing the work of others
- knowing what is going on
- decision making
- being exposed to new ideas
- generating new ideas (Sergiovanni 2001)

High leadership density contributes to the effectiveness of the school because more people share the same values, have a stake in the success of the school and carry the school's institutional memory. All of this results in high social capital and a strong sense of belonging.

In 'Profound School Improvement' Mitchell and Sackney build on Sergiovanni's insights, exploring capacity building in some detail concluding that:

> …in a learning community, individuals feel a deep sense of empowerment and autonomy and a deep personal commitment to the work of the school. This implies that people in the school form not just a community of learners but also a community of leaders. (Mitchell and Sackney 2000: 93)

The concept of community is clearly of crucial importance here. It is a term that has been frequently used in educational discourse in recent years tripping off the tongue as easily as terms such as 'empowerment' and 'ownership' which Fielding has referred to as empty rhetoric associated with 'dreary managerialism' (Fielding1999: 77). The distinction between community and organisation hinges on the relative importance of people; the personal growth and well-being of community members are the predominant concern in one case, and, in the other case, it is the effectiveness of the organisation. A problem arises of course when we consider the constitution of a school. Fielding invokes the philosophy of John MacMurray to argue for the primacy of the values of freedom and equality. He argues that we must be true to the purposes of education which is to 'help us to be and become persons not mere economic functionaries' (Fielding 1999: 72). This is laudable of course, but there is a certain naivety here in that there is no clear agreement about the purposes of schooling and in any case we have to remember that some young people are reluctant participants, going to school because it is the law of the land. Similarly, not all teachers see themselves as voluntary participants, but, in some cases, their self-construct is that of salaried educational worker with limited scope for professional judgement.

It is therefore a serious leadership challenge to find and nurture a shared sense of purpose based on educational aims. How can leadership achieve this? The rhetoric of community along with the clear articulation of a moral purpose – to pursue learning for all community members – are vital tools in this enterprise. Senior school leaders need to cultivate a shared sense of purpose by enabling community

members to feel that they belong, but this is not easy when some of those individuals actually feel alienated. There is no avoiding this dilemma. Senior leadership teams have no choice but to rise to the challenge and seek strategies that will lead to greater engagement of both teachers and students in the moral purpose of education, a crucial dimension of which is to enable community members to make their contribution to that leadership endeavour.

If the aim is to create a sense of community within which all members, regardless of whether they see themselves as committed activists, forced labour or simply in it for material gain, feel an overriding commitment to the success and health of the school, then what is needed is a set of strategies that enable students to experience the school as a community. This is a tall order given that, in spite of the wishful thinking that we might care to indulge in, it remains true that schools are institutions run by teachers for the benefit of pupils. It might even be said that the salaried staff are the protagonists and the students are the antagonists. Chris Watkins uses a powerful metaphor.

> In classrooms where a sense of community is built, students are crew, not passengers. (Watkins 2005: 47)

Watkins applies the metaphor to classrooms, but it might equally tell us something about that larger vehicle – the school. Arguably, what is really needed is a genuine sharing of responsibility and ownership in which all members have the right to act strategically to shape the school and what goes on within it.

Leadership and Student Influence

It is a reasonable and well-supported assertion that leadership is about influence (Yukl 1994). In their authoritative report for the AERA Task Force on educational leadership, Leithwood and Riehl (2003) say, like many authors, that it 'is difficult to pin down' before going on to say the following.

> At the core of most definitions of leadership are two functions: providing direction and exercising influence. Leaders mobilise and work with others to achieve shared goals.

The idea of 'direction' can loom large in some people's minds. For them the word leadership immediately conjures up the idea of hierarchy with someone having the authority to take decisions that affect other people. Leithwood and Riehl's statement could be reframed by saying that 'leadership involves the mobilisation of and working with others to achieve shared goals'. This small change makes the conceptualisation more inclusive.

As has been said already, students' participation in learning communities and their scope for influence is already challenged by their marginal status. Nevertheless those community members who participate by choice as responsible professionals can take on the challenge of enabling other community members – their students – to exercise influence and to move in from the margins. In other words to become participants or members of the crew, to use Watkins' metaphor.

As an aid to gauging the extent to which community members are able to participate, the idea of the ladder of participation is often used. There are many versions of this available on the world wide web (e.g. Hart 1992, 1997; Shier 2001, Per Schultz 2004). They are all representations of a putative hierarchy of approaches that include, on the lower rungs of the ladder, approaches which are mere decoration or tokenism, and on the upper rungs of the ladder approaches which feature independent decision making. As a tool for review, reflection and self-evaluation, the ladder of participation can be helpful, but it can also obscure the complexity of the situation.

Focusing on Pupil Participation and Influence

The IPiL project[1] (MacBeath et al. 2008) set out to explore the complexity of pupil participation and influence and to identify strategies that seemed to be fruitful. Practice of this kind is not amenable to simple and reliable description and it is not feasible to try to measure the effect in any quantifiable way. The research team chose instead to illuminate relevant practice and identify a set of principles that would help practitioners to reflect further and review their own practice. The principles that emerged were the outcome of extensive reflection and debate not just within the team but also with the practitioners and students who took an active part in the process. They are clearly aspirational, but also realistic. They reflect leading edge practice in the schools that participated in the study rather than practice that may be typical in schools across the country. They were offered as a useful set of criteria – a tool to enable practitioners, young people and their parents, policy makers and researchers to debate educational aims in relation to the participation and influence of children and young people in their learning.

The Principles

Pupil participation in their own learning is enhanced when:

- school structures are designed to encourage and support participation
- pupil participation and influence is embodied in the culture
- the relationship between teachers and pupils is seen as a partnership for learning
- the experience and expertise of pupils are drawn upon as resources for learning and school improvement
- teaching is responsive to the needs and interests of pupils and creates space for a learning dialogue to occur

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[1] IPiL – The Influence and Participation of Children and Young people in their Learning project.

- pupils are able to exercise choice and agency in all aspects of their learning
- pupils have opportunities to participate in school-wide decision-making
- everyone, including pupils, is encouraged to exercise leadership as appropriate to task and context with opportunities for leadership to be a shared activity
- everyone, including pupils, is encouraged to engage in systematic inquiry and reflection focusing on the nature of learning and the experience of schooling
- pupils are key players in school self-evaluation, an ongoing process embedded at classroom, school and community levels

These principles were derived from a project that was quite different to the sort of effectiveness studies referred to at the beginning of this chapter. The project, commissioned by the General Teaching Council for England (GTC)[2], built on extensive experience and expertise at Cambridge in the field of pupil voice, participation and consultation (e.g. MacBeath et al. 2003; Arnot et al. 2004; Rudduck and McIntyre 2007). The research focused on the practices in schools that enable children and young people to participate in and influence the conditions of their own learning. This project sought, not to measure, but to illuminate by asking pupils and teachers to talk about their experiences, concerns and aspirations.

A Participative Methodology

The project methodology was essentially a discursive one comprising an extended conversation scaffolded by workshop activities that allowed voices to be heard and issues to be debated. Regional team leaders came together with the research team at intervals to share experience and evaluate the evidence generated through the workshops and school visits. It examined practice in 26 schools in 6 regions in England over a period of 6 months. The methodology of the project reflected the principles that underpin a professional commitment to participation and influence. The process was designed to be an accessible and inclusive one, involving pupils and teachers as active participants rather than merely as objects of the research. The challenge was to provide sufficient space and structure for a meaningful participative process while at the same time ensuring that the project would have substantive outcomes useful to both practitioners and policy makers.

Students and teachers from the 22 schools across England were invited to join regional enquiry teams facilitated by highly skilled practitioner researchers who were provided with materials to support the workshops. These included, for example, sets of photographs of classroom situations, together with questions and prompts to stimulate a response. Sometimes the workshop was built around a simple schedule of questions for reflection with spaces to record comments. Post-it labels and flip chart paper were used generously to record comments and gather feedback.

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[2] The GTC is the regulatory body for the teaching profession in England and all qualified teachers currently teaching in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools within England must be registered with the Council.

These workshops enabled the team to learn about the benefits of such experiences for pupils and teachers.

The workshops in which children and adults worked together provided the space away from the pressures of the classroom to think and learn together. This collegial exploration, shorn of the defences and protocols of the classroom and of the timetable-driven school day, allowed a quality of dialogue difficult to realise within the conventional 'lesson' structure. Teachers talked about 'opportunity to explore ideas', which they ascribed to the lack of formality, concerns about status and anxiety about 'letting go'. Pupils talked about the simple things such as having name badges, meals in adult company and the importance of a congenial setting as opposed to one 'saturated with immaturity' (Lawrence-Lightfoot 2004). 'The environment was relaxed and made us feel comfortable' was an opinion expressed by pupils in many different ways. The workshops enabled pupils and staff to explore the concept and language of participation and relate this to their own experience of the project.

> Didn't feel like tokenism

> I think it was good to have all the activities and I enjoyed them and they helped a lot.

> The changing things for our school went very well because the teachers said that it will definitely happen!

> (Primary pupils)

An important element in the conference events was a workshop aimed at supporting pupil-led, school-based investigations. The intention was for these to create an additional layer of data generated by pupils themselves. Following the initial round of consultation, pupils, with the support of their teachers, planned and carried out focused inquiries in their schools in order to illuminate and evaluate ways in which their schools supported pupil participation and enabled them to influence the conditions of their learning. Although all pupils in the project engaged in this process, in the case of those with learning difficulties and disabilities, activities that enabled them to engage in ways meaningful for them were adapted. Pupils spoke of enjoying their research engagement in school, and in spite of the challenging time scale, they were ambitious, in some cases surveying over 130, and interviewing nearly 40, of their peers.

In the schools, pupil-led research teams used a range of methods to collect data including interviews, observations, questionnaires, photographs and video. Investigating topics such as 'Teacher feedback', 'Homework', 'Rewards' and 'The School Council' provided their schools with invaluable insights and in some cases were the catalyst for change in school policy and practice. In the majority of cases the quality of the pupils' research exceeded their teachers' expectations.

The project team carried out visits to seven of the participating schools including three primary schools, two secondary schools, one special school and one pupil referral unit. The case study visits involved interviews with the headteacher, a number of teachers and groups of pupils. In most cases key activities were observed and discussed with the teachers and pupils involved. Detailed evidence was also contributed by three more schools and included a documentary video made by pupils at a

secondary school, a set of reports written by pupil researchers at another secondary school and a documentary video produced by Year 6 pupils in one of the primary schools. These case studies generated rich and nuanced data about strategies for enabling influence and participation and they also captured accounts of the schools' development agendas with regard to pupil voice, consultation and participation.

While pupils carried out their investigations, the research team gathered quantitative data through a questionnaire administered to about 650 Year 5 and Year 8 pupils in the participating schools. The questionnaire was designed to gather data in relation to pupils' influence and participation in decisions about learning and teaching, assessment and behaviour.

Portraits of Practice

Data from all of the sources were analysed and processed through meetings of the research team which included the practitioners who facilitated the regional enquiry teams. What emerged was a series of portraits of innovative practice which, in various ways, helped to increase students' participation in school and classroom life and enabled them to exercise influence. A brief discussion of some of these now follows.

Consultation Through Surveys

As interest in pupil voice and consultation has gathered momentum in the UK, it is increasingly common for schools to consult pupils about the conditions of their education (Rudduck and McIntyre 2007). The Every Child Matters agenda (DfES 2003) and subsequent guidance (DfES 2004) has given official backing to what had been a minority interest. The development of school self-evaluation and its eventual promotion by Ofsted have perhaps pushed the more reluctant schools to engage in consultation. However, in many cases schools choose to consult pupils in a relatively indirect way by distributing questionnaires. In the IPiL project such surveys were common and involved a wide range of purposes and formats. In some cases they were designed to consult pupils about their experience of school in general and, in some cases, ad hoc surveys addressed specific issues arising in the course of the school term or year. Some focused directly on classroom activity, while others were concerned with physical and welfare aspects such as playground provision, toilets, lunches and tuck shops.

There is always a question as to whether action will flow from such exercises and the project team saw some impressive examples, for example where a consultation process focussing on the playground led to pupil participation in the design of a pupil-friendly space and facilities. There were similar examples in relation to lunch menus and toilets. Issues remain, however, about the extent to which such processes include focusing on teaching and learning in the classroom and whether they entail direct communication between teachers and pupils.

School Councils and Consultative Forums

School councils have been firmly established in many UK schools especially since the publication of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child (1989). Councils are normally representative of different years or age groups and may be elected by pupil vote or appointed by staff. There is sometimes a teacher presence on Councils and in some cases teachers also chair the Council. This may be necessary in special schools or with younger pupils but the chairing of the Council provides a valuable experience for pupils. Some Councils do allow pupils the final decision in some matters, for example giving them a budget which they are free to spend on whatever they choose. The project team found no evidence of pupils being reckless with this freedom. Councils were complemented by a Year Forum in which pupils debate issues at year (or perhaps even classroom) level so that issues are carried forward to the larger Council. Some of the schools in the project had a website allowing the School Council to broadcast its agendas and recommendations and also enabling pupils to upload their comments.

Positions of Responsibility

Prefects and school monitors have been an established part of schools for a century and more. Traditionally these posts are held by high achieving students who are appointed and given authority to maintain discipline in the school. In the IPiL project the team found a much wider range of positions of responsibility such as playground mentors and stewards at parent evenings. In the primary schools pupils answer the phone and welcome visitors. In some schools in the UK students have taken up the opportunity for leadership through programmes such as 'Sports Leaders', a programme which helps students to learn to lead.

> They learn the essential skills of leadership: communication, organisation and motivation, but in addition to this they grow in confidence and self-belief. The personal journeys that people undertake whilst learning to lead, stand them in good stead for their future careers and life itself. (Sports Leaders UK web site)

There are many other examples of programmes which involve student volunteering and leadership (see Bourne 2007, for example).

Pupils' Stepping into Teachers' Shoes

The IPiL research found many instances of students taking up roles traditionally played by teachers. For example, playing a part in staff selection and promotion processes. These tended to be consultative rather than decision-making functions

prior to the formal interviews where pupils meet candidates informally or conduct their own interview process. In these situations pupils were found to act responsibly, sensitively and intelligently. They tended to bring particular insights but their choices typically coincided with those of the formal panel.

The project revealed a number of examples of pupils being involved in reviews and self-evaluation exercises sometimes instigated and conducted by pupils themselves. Examples included pupil-led parent consultation evenings in which pupils carry out their own self-review and then invite their parents to come to the school to discuss the review with the teachers. Learning Review Days involve pupils in a process of reflecting on assessment data, what has been achieved and setting the targets for future learning. Pupils have also been drawn into curriculum review exercises. Peer and self-assessment, in which pupils identify criteria for judging their own and each others' work, also crosses the pupil–teacher divide.

In some of the project schools, pupils are invited to observe lessons and give teachers feedback. Lesson observation is usually accompanied by observation schedules, protocols or guidelines with training for pupils in the skills and ethics of observation. This has proved to be controversial amongst some audiences when project outcomes have been presented.

The project team found a wide range of examples of pupils taking on roles that clearly come under the heading of 'teaching'. The rationale for this is that pupils learn best when they teach others and this contributes to the development of their own personal and social skills and self-confidence. Senior pupils in one of the study schools contributed to the teaching of Modern Languages in primary schools. Pupils also adopt peer-mentoring roles, sometimes in the context of 'vertical tutoring' and 'peer mediation' in which they intervene in disputes between pupils.

Pupils as Researchers

This way of enabling pupils to participate and exercise influence seems now to have established itself quite widely, although it is still a novelty in many schools. Some have argued that this approach can be located at the very top of the ladder of participation. Fielding for example has been an enthusiastic promoter of this strategy.

> In the student-as-researcher model the issues for investigation are identified by students who are trained in the skills and values of research and enquiry and supported in their work by teachers who have also been learners at the training events. Here students shape the subject, pace and pattern of the research. Student leadership is constitutive and distinctive of this approach. (Fielding 2004: 307)

Researching aspects of school life are not only closely associated with self-evaluation and other forms of review but may also be seen as an activity in its own right with the purpose of helping pupils to acquire the skills, ethics and insights of the

researcher (Roberts and Nash 2009). These may be highly relevant to subject work as well as to career and vocational futures. Schools in this study would invite pupils to join a group through which they are inducted into research techniques and invited to carry out their own inquiries and present the outcomes to other pupils and staff. Again, self-evaluation needs to take account of such pupil enterprise because it is an essential part of the school's quality narrative.

Pupils' Choices in Learning

Some of the teachers encountered in the IPiL research argued that the types of strategy described above were poor substitutes for a pedagogy that is based on the commitment to partnership with students where it matters most – in the classroom. Teachers may be threatened by pupils inquiring into teaching but find it less challenging when their pupils focus on themselves as learners. For example, there are many different approaches commonly used to ask pupils how they prefer to learn. Investigating learning styles and preferences has enjoyed a considerable vogue in the last 5 years or so. Some schools use multiple intelligences (Gardner 1993) as triggers for dialogue rather than restrictive labelling such as the now well-known and much rehearsed VAK (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) 'styles'.

The project unearthed many different ways in which opportunities could be created for students to exercise choice. For example, collaborative planning of topic-based learning drew pupils into the planning process, encouraging them to suggest topics and use mind maps to help plan the strands of learning within a future topic. Topic-based learning, particularly in primary schools, allows pupils a greater flexibility in choosing the learning activities that match their interests and preferences.

Target setting can also be subject to pupil choice. There are many examples of this in use, for example asking pupils to specify the *must, could and should* in relation to a given learning objective: A close ally of this is 'Choosing the challenge' in which pupils are asked to choose among four levels of challenge in relation to a given learning objective.

Increasing choice and encouraging responsibility are also themes in free activity days. This involves putting on a variety of extra-curricular activities during a particular day, in the case of one school, once a fortnight, allowing children to choose activities which build skills, confidence and self-direction.

Overall, the IPil study focused on the development of participative cultures.

> …the goal for the education system in this country has to be to create more participative cultures in which dialogic relationships, partnerships for learning and consultative practices are integrated into the day-to-day practice of the school. (MacBeath et al. 2008: 51)

The key ingredient of successful engagement pivots on the concept of human agency.

> The exercise of human agency is about intentional action, exercising choice, making a difference and monitoring effects. (Watkins 2005: 47, after Dietz and Burns 1992)

It is agency that lies beneath the ladder of participation and makes the link between leadership and learning. All of the practices described above make a significant contribution to the quest for experiences which enable students to draw upon their capacity for agency and to develop it, but the follow-up project to IPiL appears to have taken this to a new level.

Beyond Participation: The Learning to Lead Project

There is no doubt that the IPiL project identified a range of innovative practices which enable young people to become partners in the learning enterprise but student leadership was not always explicit. One of the key principles arising from the project was this one:

> Everyone, including pupils, is encouraged to exercise leadership as appropriate to task and context with opportunities for leadership to be a shared activity. (MacBeath et al 2008: 8)

In an evaluation study that followed on the heels of IPiL, this principle is reflected more explicitly (Frost and MacBeath 2010). The Learning to Lead (LtoL) initiative began in the Blue School in Wells, Somerset, as a way of enhancing student engagement, building on and extending the work of the school council to create something that involved many more students. School councils are now common in schools in the UK (www.schoolcouncils.org); they are representative bodies that provide a forum for students to discuss issues of concern and to communicate their views to the senior leadership of the school. Research indicates that these bodies play an important part in supporting student voice, but participation can sometimes be quite limited, and there is often a lack of clarity about their purpose and scope (Whitty and Wisby 2007). The initiative at the Blue School involved a radical transformation in which the school council gave birth to student project teams. The teams would enable students to become activists and to exercise leadership in tackling problems and concerns in practical and transformative ways. The model has now been developed and adopted by 40 schools in various parts of England.

The Learning to Lead Model

The Learning to Lead model rests on the designation of a member of staff as the Community Link Teacher (CLT), a role that involves coordination and the development of the programme in the school. They also tend to take responsibility for training the student teams and maintaining support for them as they develop their own sense of direction. CLTs are provided with training to familiarise themselves with the structures, processes and materials by the initiators of the programme. The programme in school normally begins with an online survey of students' views about their school and community. The data from this are discussed by all

students in a 'This is Our School' planning session usually organised within tutor groups. The outcome of the survey and workshop discussions is a set of priorities for change and improvement which are then publicised throughout the school. Students of all ages are invited to join project teams focused on the priorities already identified. Examples of teams currently in operation include: 'The 'Healthy Eating Team', 'The Buddying Team', 'The Transport Team' and 'The Africa Link Team'.

Once formed, the teams are provided with a training session which is values driven and focuses on team members as individuals. The training aims to launch the teams as self-managing groups in which leadership is shared and reliance on the CLT diminishes over time. These training sessions are critical; the CLTs have a significant challenge in that their aim is to enable the team to take control within a very short time span. The training is necessarily intense and very teacher-led, but the desired outcome is for the future activity to be student-led.

Team meetings are held at lunchtimes, after school and, in some cases, during scheduled lesson time. The students draw on the tools provided as part of their training to structure their team meetings. These may feature the design of a project action plan or a project review. Agendas are drawn up and minutes recorded and the meetings are led by student facilitators. The task of facilitating the discussion is not tied to particular individuals, but is a shared responsibility with the leadership of the meeting often exercised by the younger students within the team. The decisions taken lead to practical action of all kinds including activities such as painting murals on the walls of the sports changing rooms, distributing recycling bins around the school, tending a vegetable patch, raising funds to support the work of other teams or producing a podcast to tell the rest of the school what is happening within the LtoL teams. These activities are entirely led by the students themselves with a teacher coordinator – the 'CLT' – in the background ready to help if called upon.

Built in to the Learning to Lead model are arrangements for management and governance that are underpinned by the concept of 'holarchy'. This refers to the inter-dependence of parts of a system wherein those parts have their own identity, purpose and momentum. Individuals are encouraged to see themselves as part of a team; teams are seen as part of the school, and the school is seen as part of the wider community. The teams all come together under the aegis of the School Community Council which also includes a team made up of elected representatives of student year groups. All teams carry equal weight in discussions and decision making. The LtoL governance model also includes a 'Management Support Team' which meets to address problems that require decisions or action by members of the school staff. There is also a 'Governance Support Team' which includes the Headteacher, a member of the Governing Body and a number of student representatives. This connects the work of the teams with the School Development Plan. Each term the School Community Council organises a 'School Forum' in which all the teams share their work and discuss issues arising. At this meeting a number of students are proposed and seconded to serve on the Governance Support Team.

Impact on Learning and Personal Development

Teachers and students attribute enhanced enjoyment of learning and subsequent achievement to their participation in the LtoL programme. The enthusiasm generated through their involvement in the student-led project work carries over to their classroom learning. These feelings are evident in what students told researchers.

> We didn't want to stop. We wanted to keep on going and going. We all had light bulbs on top of our heads that day.

> The energy I felt from the team was really good. I was sitting there and feeding off the energy. We were laughing, smiling. (Students, School M)

This enhancement leads naturally to a stronger sense of commitment to their own learning. Teachers talk about the positive transformation of students' attitudes and the development of skills, particularly social, communication and organisational. Students confirmed that they are developing remarkable levels of capability in relation to organising meetings, carrying out practical tasks, facilitating each other and so on.

> I've gained lots of skills, confidence, organisation. You've got to plan the meetings, write agendas, put reminders in registers. There's lots of commitment to it, but it's worth it. (Student, School B)

In addition, evidence from the evaluation indicates how Learning to Lead activities are helping to address the aims of the 'personal, learning and thinking skills' (PLTS) framework which is commonly used in UK schools (QCA 2008).

Development Citizenship

Learning to Lead activities evidently strengthen and provide direction for students' emerging sense of moral purpose. Young people such as those interviewed in this evaluation study have natural sense of concern with social issues such as the environment. This is nurtured and given a context.

> I've gained confidence in talking to people who have authority. Before I would sit back and let people in charge tell me what to do. I think this would continue in other ways, like with government, if they wanted to tear down a building say, I would try and do something to stop it happening. (Student, School B)

Students' sense of belonging to the community of the school is enhanced. Some students talk about the way in which LtoL has given them a reason for coming to school. Others highlight their renewed sense of pride in being part of their school.

> I've gained more respect for the school. I used to think about school – get it over and done with. I didn't think much of it. Now I am going out of my way to help the school rather than just turn up. (Student, School G)

Through Learning to Lead students learn to value and look after each other. In a project team, they experience acceptance and protection which can promote positive attitudes to school and feelings of self-worth.

Students develop confidence as learners and members of society. Many students talk about how their participation in LtoL activities has helped them to feel that they can solve problems and that they are capable individuals, whereas their experience of subject-related learning can cause them to feel a sense of failure.

> It feels like we've got the power to do something. …We have a bit of power, but we use it in a good way. (Student, School N)

Here the student talks of power which is perhaps not the right concept but one that readily comes to mind.

Agency

Of course this is a matter of interpretation, but it seems clear that engagement in student leadership activity as described above leads to enhanced agency for students. The sense of empowerment and purposeful engagement is experienced as transformative.

> It's made a difference because you ain't just affecting yourself anymore, you're affecting everyone else, like you're getting involved with others to make a difference and like you ain't just an individual anymore, but you recognise you're part of everything else. (Student, School M)

An essential ingredient of this is that students become more aware of their strengths and talents as they respond to the challenge of new situations.

> As a team we realised we'd made a mistake and knew what we had to do….as a team I think it's made us stronger and realised, yes, we are learning all the time and we make mistakes in our lives and we can lead our lives how we want to. (Student, School M)

The experience of collaborating with other students and taking action within project teams helps them to develop resilience and a positive disposition to challenges.

> To make positive changes, you need to be positive about it, so if things go wrong, you say 'this is where it went wrong', but this is how we can improve it. (Student, School M)

Teachers observe that their students become more willing to take risks and try new things.

Benefits to the School and Community

It was clear from the evaluation study that Learning to Lead can contribute significantly to transforming relationships within schools. For example, relationships between teachers and students become more respectful and collaborative. There is a change in the dynamic when the differential in subject-related expertise is taken out of the equation.

In the school (community) council the teachers treat you with respect. They are doing it because they want to. They trust you and believe you can do it. (Student, School A

Relationships between students are similarly improved because belonging to a team with students of different ages and working together for a common cause strengthens solidarity and empathy.

The projects themselves led to improvements in the school environment and facilities; for example, a more effective system of recycling in the school or refurbished toilets.

A critical question concerns the extent to which student voice, participation and leadership can impinge on the core business of the school – the quality of learning and teaching. The evidence from the evaluation study shows that is beginning to impact on what happens inside the classroom. Some project teams address aspects of teaching and learning and some teachers are using the LtoL tools in the classroom. Students are making the connection between LtoL and learning in the classroom.

It helps with English because it is expanding our minds and with Maths because if we plan to do something it costs money and we have to work this out. (Student, School M)

Learning to Lead can be said to have impact on teachers' expectations. They are becoming more aware of their students' potential when they see how students respond to the challenge of project team activity.

An overarching effect is that, amongst students, participation is seen to be more attractive where other activities such as the school council were seen as 'uncool'. There is a strong sense in which students are contributing to building capacity and sustainability, expressed by one student in this way:

We're changing stuff and doing this for other generations who come to this school as well. This will stay. It won't finish when we leave. (Student, School M)

These wider impacts are inextricably bound up with the activities that extend students' reach to the wider community. Some project teams focus on raising money for charities and some are concerned with 'Global Links and Fair Trade'. One school in a disadvantaged area has recently formed a team called 'Building a Better Community' which aims to tackle racism and increase people's pride in their community. Projects such as these not only benefit people in the wider community but also enhance the school's standing in that community, improving relationships and raising aspirations. In addition, students go to events outside school to speak about their achievements, inspiring other students and teachers to take up the challenge of student leadership.

Challenges

Whilst finding every cause for celebration of the success of the Learning to Lead programme, the evaluation study inevitably identified a range of challenges. Many of these are concerned with the logistical issues that might constrain the development

Table 48.1 Tensions between learning to lead and dominant paradigms

Learning to lead pedagogy	Traditional pedagogy
Student-led agenda	National curriculum-led agenda
Student-led activity	Teacher-led activity
Student-determined goals	Prescribed goals
Negotiation	Instruction
Assessment of learning implicit in review and reflection	Assessment of learning determined by curriculum-related criteria
Focused on practical action	Focused on academic learning

of the initiative. Budgets are stretched by the provision of training and support for example. However, more significantly are the challenges that arise from the clash of cultures that LtoL entails.

In the initial stages of implementation some teachers harboured doubts about their students' capacity to take responsibility and to exercise leadership. However, experience tended to allay these doubts. A far greater challenge stems from the way that this programme tends, in many cases, to run in parallel to the mainstream curriculum experience rather than being integrated into it. The evaluation study highlights the way the values and pedagogical assumptions implicit in the Learning to Lead approach are to a lesser or greater extent at odds with the dominant pedagogic norms, or 'codes' of the school. This tension is illustrated in Table 48.1.

One student expressed the issue in this way:

> In lessons you don't have influence and power. In lessons you sit back and are told what to do. If someone's being demanding in a lesson you wouldn't want them to be like that – assertive.

Students are clearly functioning in two different worlds, skilfully negotiating the codes that determine behaviour in either place but knowing which one they largely prefer. However, there are signs that the introduction of Learning to Lead is contributing to the development of a pedagogy that is more personalised, one that recognises the need to enhance students' agency. It is perhaps inevitable that some students feel frustrated by the discontinuity of experience, between the norms and rules that apply in the classroom and those that determine the way a Learning to Lead project team works and there is a great deal of optimism focused on the hope that the experience of LtoL will inform the development of pedagogy within the school such that the difference fades away over time.

A more integrated approach is being used in some schools where all Year 7 students are engaged in the early stages of the Learning to Lead process within normal lesson time. This is very encouraging in that it opens up the possibility of resolving tensions in pedagogy and ensures that all students have the opportunity to become involved. There is a hazard however which pivots on the principle of voluntarism. The students themselves reported that they have to guard against the problem of fellow students being reluctant team members or joining teams because it might enable them to avoid mathematics lessons or some such.

Another significant challenge revolves round the relationship between the student-led project team work and the governance of the programme through what is

referred to as the 'school community council'. The model assumes that all teams will belong to the council which meets once a term and acts as a forum for sharing, debate and influence. If these arrangements are not put in place, there is a danger that gains made over the past two decades in student voice and representation may be lost while the students are busy refurbishing toilets and planting tomatoes in the playground. In the Learning to Lead model not only is student voice protected but is also enhanced. The hazard is entirely a matter of the extent to which schools develop the approach with sufficient integrity.

An Historical Perspective

This evaluation suggests grounds for optimism about the future of student leadership. Although it has enjoyed enthusiastic support from the Parliamentary Select Committee on education in the UK, it remains to be seen if it is able to grow as a movement for change. Developing a programme such as this inevitably demands an investment of time and resources but the challenges briefly indicated here are being addressed, and the approach is evolving and gathering momentum.

The LtoL study provides grounds for claiming that student leadership has enormous potential to transform the experience of school for young people and in so doing transform the school itself. The evaluation did not seek to be an effectiveness study, and it will be interesting to see how the trends in levels of measured attainment develop in the participating schools. However, the qualitative evidence points to radical shifts in student dispositions, marked improvement in the quality of relationships and the development of participative school cultures which enable young people to flourish and achieve.

By inviting students to exercise leadership in the way that the LtoL programme does, we can take a major step towards the restoration of trust in young people. This is badly needed in order to mobilise the energy, creativity and moral purpose of students for the benefit of their own education and for the benefit of their schools and communities.

The following anecdote may help to put these developments into perspective. One of the schools participating in the Learning to Lead programme evaluation was Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (EGA) school in Islington which I visited myself. Teresa Bonsu, the LtoL CLT, introduced me to groups of young students who made excellent presentations about their LtoL project work. They told me how they are improving communication in the school having taken over the production and publication of the school bulletin which now takes the form of a podcast. One of the teams there leads on the links between EGA and schools in China and Africa. They also revelled in their account of when Michelle Obama visited the school earlier in the year and praised them for the way they are taking responsibility for shaping the future. The students had developed a sophisticated repertoire of leadership skills and dispositions.

The students at EGA are of course firmly rooted in the here and now, and they were unaware of the fact that their school is built on the site of Risinghill

Comprehensive School which existed between 1960 and 1965. This was one of the first comprehensives, and it served a disadvantaged community whose members were accustomed to authoritarian school regimes in which physical punishment by teachers and other forms of violence were the norm. The headteacher, Michael Duane, who took over Risinghill in 1960 was determined to create a more humane community. Courageously he pursued a number of innovations including the abolition of corporal punishment and the establishment of a school council to enable students to air their views. These measures divided the staff and the ensuing controversy led to censure by the local authority and the eventual closure of the school (Berg 1969).

Children's charities and advocates have pointed out that children and young people are unreasonably demonised (UK Childrens' Commissioners 2008). Widespread anxiety about youth crime and student disaffection can lead to low expectations and a restrictive environment. However, if we want our schools to be successful in enabling children to become responsible and capable members of society, we may have to be courageous in putting our trust in them and helping them to exercise leadership.

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Part VIII
From People Learning to Organisational Learning: Building Capacity

Chapter 49
Schools as Organizational Connectors and Reproducers of the Hierarchy of Learning Success

Fenwick W. English

> In the absence of analysis of what the resigned withdrawal of the members of the working classes from the School owes to the functioning and functions of the educational system as an agency of selection, elimination and concealment of elimination under selection, all that technocratic research is able to see in the statistics of educational opportunity which highlights the unequal representation of the different social classes in the different stages and types of education, is the manifestation of an isolated relationship between scholastic performance, taken at face value, and the series of advantages or disadvantages deriving from social origin (Bourdieu and Passeron 2000, pp. 154–5).

The presence of disparities in educational attainment among different social classes in the schools of much of the world remains a niggling reminder that political rhetoric notwithstanding, some educational systems have made precious little progress in uplifting large chunks of the lower classes to a higher class position in their respective economies (*The Economist* 2006). The presence of the achievement gap anchored in issues of race, class and gender continue to be surfaced in the data streams from standardized tests as the measurement codex with embarrassing predictability (English 2004, 2006).

This chapter is about the creation and use of the curriculum management audit, something which began in 1979 in Columbus, Ohio where I worked as a manager in the accounting and consulting firm of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co. of Washington, DC (English, 1988). Since that time hundreds of audits have been performed in over 30 states and several foreign countries, though the latter are largely of American schools functioning there, but whose student bodies and faculties were international in composition (Steffy 1995, p. 75).

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Humble Beginnings

The concept of the curriculum audit began with publication of Leon Lessinger's (1970) best-selling book *Every Kid a Winner* in which he described the necessity of creating an objective, impartial external review process to assure the public that their tax dollars were supporting the best practices possible within their educational systems. Lessinger's model was lifted from that of the business world with the practice of certified public accountants issuing a letter based on their review of the financial practices within a commercial enterprise, that what the business said was going on was, in fact, true. Lessinger discounted educational accreditation practices as too in-grown and not rigorous enough so even after the review the credibility of the report produced was quite low. Lessinger called his approach an *educational performance audit* or EPA. To operationalize the idea required the creation of standards by which evidence could be connected to practices. The EPA was not solely about the curriculum. It was about organizational performance in an educational setting. The curriculum as it turned out was and is the major connective concept which distinguishes an educational system from others. It was the educative function that centered the curriculum and elevated its importance in educational systems (see English and Steffy 2005). However, when examining organizational operations and functions, the curriculum had to be seen as performing what Thompson (1967) referred to as the "core technology" of the organization. This meant that the standards for an EPA could not be considered apart from the organization's overall performance, however determined (see Frase and English 2002). But that quickly became student learning in the dominant model which defined performance itself. What is important is that curriculum was envisioned as a means to the end of learning. Curriculum was not envisioned as floating within a defined organizational space and something which would or should be considered an end in and of itself. This is a point of contention and remains so to this day. Some educationists imagine that the curriculum could or should be the means to embracing goals apart from the state/government or even as a resistance to the prevailing political/governing machinery. From this perspective curriculum should have its own identity and its own agenda. From an organizational perspective this would be an example of a dysfunctional organization in which its commercial or social functions would be blocked or changed by one of its internal divisions. Such things do happen, of course, but they are viewed as an example of sub-optimization, that is, a subversion of inhibiting overall system performance (see Immigart and Pilecki 1973, p. 8; Juran 1988, pp. 151–2). An example of a recent spate over sub-optimization occurred when the US federal government gave states and local school districts stimulus funds for special education increases. Instead of using the money to increase funding in special education, many school systems used the funds to put into special education to comply with the law, and the withdrawn funds replaced to save jobs and programs. The transfer drew sharp outcries from special education advocates (Chaker 2010).

The Embodiment of Perfection: The Flawless Organization

It does seem obvious that curriculum set within a large organization will become the means toward the organization's ends. If the curriculum does contain contrary values or is at odds with the organization's value structure, it would quickly be taken over or co-opted unless those values are embraced by the power figures of the organization. But values are both explicit as in policies and statements in plans which become mission or vision statements, and implicit, as the living interactions between people. Sometimes these are at odds with one another. And the way organizations are put together and work, or are supposed to work, rest on assumptions and values that determine almost everything else. And ideas about organizations have a certain historicity to them which as Foucault (2000) noted that "there is continually being produced within it a separation of true and false" (p. 233). One of the things that comprised this phenomenon is the question, "…what historical knowledge is possible of a history that itself produces the true/false distinction on which such knowledge depends?" (p. 233).

This problem is no more apparent than in placing the curriculum to be examined or audited within an idea about organization, in this case a school system or district as they are called in the United States. A school system is a cluster or grouping of schools. Whereas a school has a certain physicality to it, there is no comparable physicality to a school system though there may be a central building containing officials or officers with system-wide duties. What is crucial to examining system curriculum are the connections within the units comprising the totality. These are invisible, though conversations and documents may reveal a certain presence regarding how it works or does not work. The situation facing someone trying to determine the effectiveness of system-wide curriculum is that while the curriculum has a tangible presence in documents, the connectivity of curriculum within a school system is an outcome of how the other work units are linked by it and to it. The nature of that linkage is both defined and assessed by the same notion. What exists is what is examined but determined ahead of time and is what should be.

In this sense ideas about organizations may be considered ideologies, that is, a closed-end narrative that is self-justifying and "helps to legitimate a dominant political power" (Eagleton 1991, p. 1). Ideologies are therefore never neutral. Bernstein (1996) differentiates between power and control. For Bernstein *power* is about the authority to "create boundaries, legitimize boundaries, reproduce boundaries, between different categories of groups, gender, class, race, different categories of discourse…" (p. 19). *Control*, however, "establishes legitimate forms of communication appropriate to the different categories" (p. 19). *Control*, avers Bernstein (1996) is about carrying "the boundary relations of power and socializes individuals into these relationships" (p. 19). We shall see how a specific type of organizational ideology is applied in curriculum audits and determines the nature of the findings and recommendations.

The ideology of organization used in an audit is what Mintzberg has called "the machine bureaucracy." In his book *Structure in Fives: Designing Effective*

Organizations (1983) Mintzberg notes that, "When an integrated set of simple, repetitive tasks must be performed precisely and consistently by human beings, the Machine Bureaucracy is the most efficient structure – indeed, the only conceivable one" (p. 176). The first reaction to the name "machine bureaucracy" is almost always negative. Bureaucracy has come to symbolize a huge, bumbling, inefficient and ineffective organization, though that was not its original meaning when Max Weber said that, "The decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization" (Gerth and Mills 1970, p. 214). Weber went on to note that bureaucratic organization raised to the optimum level "precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs" (p. 214). Mintzberg (1983) indicates that "control is the forte of the Machine Bureaucracy" (p. 174). And control is essential to regulatory agencies and underscored by the need for accountability. Administrative staff cannot be accountable unless they also possess the control of the range of actions linked to their job roles. This need works to push for tighter connections within the organization's functions. It is brought to a high level of need with centralized, standardized testing programs which are now the staple of nearly all states in the Union. A centralized, standardized measure of student learning imposed on school systems with severe punishments or rewards requires a centralized response, especially at the secondary level where feeder school prior learning is essential for later school tested learning. Testing that assumes all students must reach a specified learning level at a specific point in time maximizes the functional need for tighter connections and standardized teaching. Weick's (1976) classic description of school systems as "loosely-coupled" is a major internal barrier to the kind of control required with accountability linked to high-stakes testing scenarios (see English 2008). This fact of organizational life is not well understood by legislators or policy wonks who lack experience of how work is accomplished in schools and school systems. They just do not understand what Mintzberg (1983) states, "… the more an organization is controlled externally, the more its structure is centralized and formalized" (p. 174).

The standards of the curriculum audit, in use over 20 years in many applications are these:

Standard 1: The school system demonstrates its control of resources, programs, and personnel. Such control is evidenced by:

- A curriculum that is centrally defined and adopted by the board of education;
- A clear set of policies that establish an operational framework for management that permits accountability and which reflects state requirements and local program goals and the necessity to use achievement data to improve school system operations;
- A functional administrative structure that facilitates the design and delivery of the district's curriculum;
- A direct, uninterrupted line of authority from school board/superintendent and other central office officials to principals and classroom teachers;
- Organizational development efforts that are focused to improve system effectiveness;

- Documentation of school board and central office planning for the attainment of goals, objectives, and mission over time; and
- A clear mechanism to define and direct change and innovation within the school system to permit maximization of its resources on priority goals, objectives, and mission.

Standard 2: The school district has established clear and valid objectives for students. Such control is evidenced by:

- A clearly established, board-adopted system-wide set of goals and objectives for all programs and courses;
- Demonstration that the system is contextual and responsive to national, state, and other expectations as evidenced in local initiatives;
- Operations set within a framework that carriers out the system's goals and objectives;
- Evidence of a comprehensive, detailed, short and long-range curriculum management planning;
- Knowledge, local validation, and use of current best practices and emerging curriculum trends;
- Written curriculum that addresses both current and future needs of students;
- Major programmatic initiatives designed to be cohesive;
- Provision of explicit direction for the superintendent and professional staff; and
- A framework that exists for systemic curricular change.

Standard 3: The school district demonstrates internal consistency and rational equity in its program development and implementation as evidenced by:

- Documents/sources that reveal internal connections at different levels in the system;
- Predictable consistency through a coherent rationale for content delineation within the curriculum;
- Equity of curriculum/course access and opportunity;
- Allocation of resource flow to areas of greatest need;
- A curriculum that is clearly explained to members of the teaching staff and building-level administrators and other supervisory personnel;
- Specific professional development programs to enhance curricular design and delivery;
- A curriculum that is monitored by central office and site supervisory personnel; and
- Teacher and administrator responsiveness to school board policies, currently and over time.

Standard 4: The school district uses the results from system-designed and or adopted assessments to adjust, improve, or terminate ineffective practices or programs as evidenced by:

- A formative and summative assessment system linked to a clear rationale in board policy;

- Knowledge, local validation, and use of current curricular and program assessment best practices;
- Use of a student and program assessment plan that provides for diverse assessment strategies for varied purposes at all levels – district, school, and classroom;
- A way to provide feedback to the teaching and administrative staffs regarding how classroom instruction may be evaluated and subsequently improved;
- A timely and relevant database upon which to analyze important trends in student achievement;
- A vehicle to examine how well-specific programs are actually producing desired learner outcomes or results;
- A database to compare the strengths and weaknesses of various programs and program alternatives, as well as to engage in equity analysis;
- A method/means to relate to a programmatic budget and enable the school system to engage in cost–benefit analysis; and
- Organizational data gathered and used to continually improve system functions.

Standard 5: The school district has improved productivity as evidenced by:

- Planned and actual congruence among curricular objectives, results, and financial allocations;
- A financial database and network that can track costs to results, provide sufficient fiduciary control, and be used as a viable database in making policy and operational decisions;
- Specific means that have been selected or modified and implemented to attain better results in the schools over a specified time period;
- A planned series of interventions that have raised pupil performance levels over time and maintained those levels within the same cost parameters as in the past;
- School facilities that are well-kept, sufficient, safe, orderly, and conducive to effective delivery of the instructional program; and
- Support systems that function in systemic ways.

The audit standards place a premium on rationality, precision, specificity, consistency, order, and predictability. In fact the idea of rationality is built into the standards. As Mintzberg (1983) indicates the work flow of the machine bureaucracy is highly rationalized. The operating core is sealed off from "disruptive environmental influence" (p. 164). The key part of the machine bureaucracy is its *technostructure*, defined as the analysts (staff) who are engaged in the standardization of the work itself. It may be seen that the creation of the curriculum is a process of work standardization and as Mintzberg (1983) observes the impact of work standardization is to institutionalize work content, lessening the need for direct supervision by middle managers. The creation of highly rationalized, detailed work plans has a long history in the ideology of scientific management when Frederick Taylor separated the work from the worker, and is perpetuated today with the institutionalization of strategic planning which rests on the same divide between workers and planners or in industrialized settings, the blue collar and white collar employees (Jelinek 1979).

The one overriding concern of those working in a machine bureaucracy is *control*. It is, as Mintzberg (1983) notes, an "obsession" (p. 167). *Control* is required to eliminate all forms of uncertainty ensure the greatest utilization of resources, linkage to forms of assessment imposed externally, and plan to attain levels of predictability and consistency which are subject to ruptures if the system is physically spread out over land or located in different land areas. To be successful machine bureaucracies require environments which are stable and simple. In education with the complexity of the human being involved, mass educational systems have resorted to simplistic sorting mechanisms such as age-grading or recognizing differences only in pacing (fast, slow) or density (enriched curriculum content). More will be said about the major issue of irrationality which exists in educational systems when task complexity moves beyond pacing and the compacting of the curriculum (enrichment).

What Audits Reveal

Typical findings that curriculum audits have revealed in school districts in the past are now reviewed by standard.

Typical Findings for Standard 1: Control

Board Policies Are Too Vague or Absent in Most School Systems

In theory, school system operations are supposed to be directed by an elected or appointed board of education. This is the hinge on which American local control of education rests. While school boards have broad legal powers to hire or fire the superintendent and other administrative officers and teachers who are not on tenure, implement curriculum, construct buildings and raise property taxes, their policies leave much to be desired in the way of expectation and specificity. Typical audit findings show that such policies, even when dictated by state law or purchased from the state school boards association, are too broad to be of much help in institutionalizing good practices. Following Mintzberg's (1983) observations about machine bureaucracy, the needs of this form of organization require more detailed regulation, enhanced control and a way to minimize interference in the technostructure. Policies are rated by auditors across all five standards. To attain the highest rating, standard by standard, policies would have to specify (see Downey and Steffy 2009; English and Poston 1999):

Standard 1: Control

- Directs district written curriculum documents to address standards that are more rigorous than state and national standards to provide challenge for those students who have mastered state standards and to specify the specific content, context, and type of cognition for all content areas;

- Directs adherence to mastery learning practices for all grade levels and content areas including electives;
- Directs professional appraisal processes to address specific accountability functions in the job descriptions of all staff and relate those to improved student achievement;
- Requires as part of the school and district planning process that the superintendent and staff think collectively about the future, and that the discussion should take some tangible form. This allows for flexibility as needed without prescribing a particular template;
- Directs specification of decision-making bodies (e.g., cabinet, task forces, committees) regarding composition and decision-making responsibilities to ensure consistency, non-duplication of tasks, and product requirements;

Standard 2: Direction

- Requires the development of suggestions for differentiating curriculum to address content, context, and type of cognition based upon student need as diagnostically assessed;
- Requires development of procedures for both formative and summative review of the written curriculum for all grade levels and content areas;
- Directs district staff to identify discrete areas of misalignment and provide teachers with supplementary materials to address the misalignment;
- Requires focused professional development and coaching to support deployment and delivery of the identified priorities within the content areas;
- Directs administrative staff to prepare annual recommendations for subject-related and school-wide program revisions, expansion, or termination based on improved student achievement;

Standard 3: Equity

- Directs the identification of prerequisite skills and their placement in the written curriculum at the appropriate grade/instructional level for core content areas;
- Requires vertical articulation and horizontal coordination across grade levels and among schools at a given level for all content areas;
- Directs periodic formative and summative evaluation of the impact of professional development on increased student achievement;
- Directs district staff to prepare an annual report for the board regarding the status of curriculum delivery;
- Requires periodic school and classroom data-gathering reports from administrators detailing the status of the delivery of the curriculum with recommendations for the creation of professional development activities or curricular revisions;
- Requires an annual review of equity data (such as access, racial isolation, rigor) and the development of a plan for correcting equity issues that will be presented to the board.

Standard 4: Feedback

- Requires the development, deployment, and implementation of a district student assessment process that is differentiated to address variations in student achievement (both above and below grade level). Assessments include both formative and summative measures. (The process is not formative and summative, the assessments are.)
- Requires the periodic review of each program to determine modifications needed to better reach programmatic goals;
- Requires the development of exit tests for all courses and grade levels (including electives) to creation of disaggregated test results relative to the standards and objectives for the course, analysis of the disaggregated test results relative to the standards and objectives for the course, analysis of the disaggregated test results, and development of modifications as needed in the program/curriculum to bring about effectiveness and efficiency;
- Requires summative reports to the board at least every 5 years for all content areas before curriculum revision or major materials acquisition, with the reports occurring prior to the curricular adoption cycle.

Standard 5: Productivity

- Directs full implementation of a program-centered budgeting process that includes incremental funding possibilities, a process for evaluating options, and the use of program evaluation data linked to budget allocations. This process enables program budget decisions to be based upon documented results and performance;
- Directs a budget that provides resources needed to enable achievement of system priorities over time and demonstrated necessity of resources based on measurable results and/or performance of programs and activities;
- Directs facilities planning linked to future curriculum and instructional trends and to the teaching–learning environment incorporated in documented system mission and vision statements;
- Requires periodic reports to the board with recommendations for continuing, revising, and developing new support services to enhance fulfillment of the mission, including need-based data;
- Directs the development of specific requirements for data analysis that leads to improved student learning for all operations of the district;
- Directs that all district, department, and program plans incorporate procedures for change strategies to ensure the institutionalization of change for improvement and include procedures with formative and summative practices that provide data about change implementation and effectiveness.

Very few school system board policies meet these criteria. Very few research studies even deal with the requirement of the board of education to mandate the kind of tight internal linkages and work task delineation contained with the audit's scope (see Snipes et al. 2002). Clearly these requirements serve to enhance and extend the influence of a system's technostructure, or what some organizational theorists have called the "technical core" (see Thompson 1967, p. 45).

From the ideological narrative of the audit, only the elected or appointed board has the legal authority to put the necessary ingredients together in a policy and institutionalize the means to ensure the control, consistency and specificity required to match the external demands of centralized testing. The administrative staff at the organization's strategic apex is headed by the superintendent. The superintendency is subject to political pressures externally and internally and the office has shown itself to be politically vulnerable (Kowalski and Brunner 2005). Chronic superintendent turnover is often a sign of a very troubled school system (see Kelleher and Leverett 2006). The bottom line is that the superintendency, which is the highest managerial position in US school systems, is "not an independent executive with specific policy-making powers, for the separation-of-powers doctrine does not prevail in public school systems. The superintendent is not expected to represent substantive positions apart from the board" (Lortie 1969, p. 4). And the superintendency is often not viable enough nor stable enough to provide the necessary sustained political and tactical leadership to create the internal linkages necessary to lift student achievement as measured by externally imposed standardized testing. The slack therefore has to be taken up by the authority of the board of education in its policy development prerogatives.

The observation by Lortie (1969) that the power and authority of the superintendent is not different than the board's means that "the formal and legal allocation of authority in school systems is monolithic, hierarchical, and concentrated; official powers are focused at the apex of the structure" (p. 4). One of the critical manifestations of that power resides in planning and in the type of planning embraced by audit standards. Lewis (1969) made a distinction between "planning by inducement" and "planning by direction." The latter term is a form of top-down planning where specific orders are issued from a command apex. This type of planning is compatible with the governance structure of public school systems.

How the Audit Views Planning: Most School System Planning Is Inadequate

Here are the eight characteristics by which district planning efforts are audited (Downey and Steffy 2009, pp. 4–3).

1. *Policy expectations*: The governing board has placed into policy the expectation that the superintendent and staff think collectively about the future and that this thinking should take some tangible form without prescribing a particular template, allowing for flexibility as needed;
2. *Vision/direction*: Leadership has explicit or explicit vision of the general direction for where the organization is going for improvement purposes. That vision emerges from having thought about the future in the context of that future.

3. *Data driven*: Data influence the planning and system directions/initiatives.
4. *Budget timing*: Budget planning for change is done in concert with other planning, with goals and actions from those plans driving the budget planning.
5. *Day-to-day decisions*: Leadership makes day-to-day decisions regarding the implicit or explicit direction of the system and facilitates movement toward the planned direction.
6. *Emergent/fluid planning*: Leadership is able to adjust discrepancies between current status and desired status, facilitates movement toward the desired status, and is fluid in planning efforts (emergent in nature).
7. *Deliberate articulated actions*: Staff are involved in a purposeful way through such efforts as school/unit improvement planning, professional development councils, and district task forces, which are congruent with the articulated direction of the system or system initiatives.
8. *Aligned professional development*: Professional development endeavors are aligned to system planning goals and initiatives.

This is the expected context that auditors desire to see when they examine the nature of planning efforts in a school system. Mintzberg (1994) has called these indicators centered on *performance control*. In this context there are "two hierarchies of objectives and budgets. These are routine in nature… quantitative in approach and largely the concern of the accounting people, easily mapped onto the existing structure, and geared to motivation and control" (p. 78).

The audit also applies seven characteristics which determine the quality of the planning efforts in a school district. These are:

1. *Reasonable and clear*: The plan is reasonable; it has a feasible number of goals and objectives for the resources (financial, time, people) available. Moreover, the goals and objectives are clear and measurable.
2. *Emergent/fluid*: The plan allows for emergent thinking, trends, and changes that impact the system both internally and externally.
3. *Change strategies*: The plan clearly delineates strategies to be used to support deploying the steps and tasks outlined in the plan (e.g., capacity building of appropriate staff).
4. *Deployment strategies*: The plan clearly delineates strategies to be used to support deploying the steps and tasks outlined in the plan (e.g., orientation to the change, staff development on the proficiencies needed to bring about the change, communication regarding planned change).
5. *Integration of goals and actions*: All goals and actions in the plan are interrelated and congruent with one another.
6. *Evaluation plan and implementation*: There is a written plan to evaluate the objectives of the plan (not to evaluate whether or not the activities have taken place). Evaluation components of plans are actions to be implemented; plans are evaluated for their effects or results and modified as needed. There is both ongoing formative evaluation, so that the plans are revised as needed, and an annual summative evaluation.

7. *Monitoring*: Systems are in place and are being implemented for assessing the status of activities, analyzing the results, and reporting the outcomes that take place as the plan is designed, deployed, and delivered.

Curriculum auditors rate plans as "adequate" or "inadequate" on these indices. Mintzberg (1994) indicates that conventional strategic planning begins with objectives, moves to strategies and then into programs and a range of actions. Objectives, strategies and programs are all connected to budgets. He calls this the "black box" of strategy formulation (p. 82). In criticizing "new management" as a form of religion, Pattison (1997) notes that some forms of management carry with them the "prevalence of language and metaphors drawn from religion, particularly apocalyptic, millenarian Christianity. Not since the earliest days of the Christian Church, if then, has the language of visions, missions, doom scenarios and the like had such widespread currency" (p. 68). He notes that visions emanate from prophets and that these are not democratically derived or defined, but imposed. The ideology of the audit similarly accepts these practices and looks for their impact rather than their derivation. In short, visions and missions become part of *performance control.*

Engaging in Curriculum Analysis

There are five essential frames that can be used to examine the technical work plans produced in a school district's technostructure by specialized staff. The type and kind of analyses is dependent on the quality of the actual curriculum documents produced by technostructure managers. Those frames are:

Frame 1: Minimal Basic Curriculum Document Analysis

In this part of auditing the essential documents are examined, the key one being a curriculum management plan. Such a management plan is judged as "adequate" or "inadequate" on 15 criteria. They are as follows:

1. Describes the philosophical framework for the design of the curriculum, including such directives as standards-based, results-based, competency-based, alignment of the written, taught, and tested curriculum, and the approaches used in delivering the curriculum.
2. Identifies the time, scope, and procedures for a periodic cycle of review of curriculum in all subject areas and at all grade levels.
3. Defines and directs the stages of curriculum development.
4. Specifies the roles and responsibilities of the board, central office staff members, and school-based staff members in the design and delivery of curriculum.

5. Presents the format and components of all curriculum, assessments, and instructional guide documents.
6. Directs how state and national standards will be considered in the curriculum. This includes whether or not to use a backloaded approach in which the curriculum is derived from high-stakes tested learnings (topological and/or deep alignment) and/or frontloaded approach, which derives the curriculum from national, state, or local learnings, will be used.
7. Requires for every content area a focused set of precise student objectives/student expectations and standards that are reasonable in number – so the student has time to master the content.
8. Directs that the curriculum must not only specify the content of the student objectives/student expectations, but it will also include multiple contexts and cognitive types.
9. Specifies the overall beliefs and procedures governing the assessment of curriculum effectiveness. This includes curriculum-based diagnostic assessments and rubrics (as needed). Such assessments are to direct instructional decisions regarding prerequisite knowledge, short-term acquisition, and long-term mastery of the learning.
10. Directs curriculum to be designed so that it supports teachers' differentiating both their instructional approaches and their selection of student objectives at the right level of difficulty. This is to provide for an accelerated pace for students who do not have the prerequisites – are below grade level – as well as those who have already mastered the objectives and need a more challenging, rigorous pace – above grade level.
11. Describes the procedures teachers and administrators will follow in using assessment data to strengthen curriculum and instructional decision making.
12. Outlines procedures for conducting formative and summative evaluations of programs and curriculum content.
13. Requires the design of a comprehensive staff development program linked to curriculum design and delivery.
14. Presents procedures for monitoring the delivery of curriculum.
15. Establishes a communication plan for the process of curriculum design and delivery.

Once again, these criteria reveal the desired "tight fit" between the definition of technostructure work and design and delivery in implementation in classrooms with school systems. That tight fit is indicated in *Exhibit 1* below. What the exhibit shows are that when an organization is characterized by rules and programs, hierarchical referrals and goal setting, there are four organizational design strategies that either reduce the need for information processing or increase the capacity of the organization to process the information (see Galbraith 1973, pp. 14–19). The choice of which design strategy is selected is usually "the least expensive in its environmental context" (Galbraith 1973, p. 19). If the organization does not act then "reduced performance standards will happen automatically" (Galbraith 1973, p. 19). The elimination of slack is one strategy to ensure

Fig. 49.1 The junctures for
auditing for tight connections
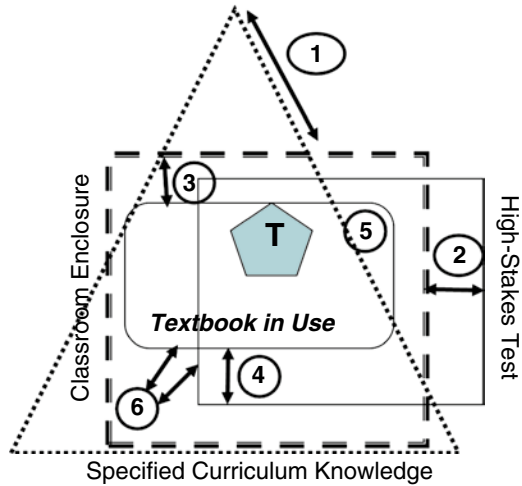
that performance standards are not lowered and involves (a) investment in vertical information systems and/or (b) the creation of lateral relations. Both of these are represented in Fig. 49.1.

In Fig. 49.1, juncture 1 is the part of the curriculum that is not in the classroom, in the textbook, or on the high-stakes test. Juncture 2 is the high-stakes test content that is neither in the classroom nor in the curriculum. Juncture 3 is the content that is in the classroom but not in the textbook. Juncture 4 is the content which is on the test and in the classroom but not in the textbook. Juncture 5 is the content that is in the textbook, the classroom, and the test, but not in the curriculum. Juncture 6 is the content of the classroom which is neither in the textbook nor on the test, but it is contained in the curriculum. This is simply the curriculum that is not tested. The audit ideology requires school district personnel to consider all of these junctures as spaces or "slack" that need to be eliminated so that there is total congruence among all of these elements (see English 2008, pp.15–16).

Frame 2: Organizational Expectations Analysis

In this curricular frame, auditors "mirror back" to the school system its expectations for curriculum. A variety of formats can be used to show system outcomes aligned to state standards and/or those same outcomes aligned to national standards. Another type of analysis can show the cognition types of system outcomes (using the original Bloom (1956) revised Bloom, or state combination, or whatever is in the contract or district documents which delineate expectations).

Frame 3: Alignment Analysis of the Minimal Basic Components for Specificity, Congruence (Match) and Feasibility

This frame is used to examine curriculum guides, curricular pacing documents, courses of study or whatever they may be called in the local context. The examination pertains to the specificity of the objectives stated in the documents, the type and alignment to specific forms of assessment, the delineation of prerequisites prior to instruction, content congruence to existing resources such as textbooks, films, computer programs, and teaching strategies to attain the desired outcomes. These analyses are quantitative in nature and result in several tables showing the scores obtained document by document.

Frame 4: Conducting a Deeper Alignment Analysis

Deep alignment goes beyond a superficial examination of a match between any specific test or assessment and what looks similar in a curriculum or related curricular materials. Simple alignment was initially called "curriculum overlap" between the test and curriculum (Husen 1967; Chang and Raths 1971). Deep alignment refers to connecting curriculum content with test content that includes format and cognitive level congruence (see English and Steffy 2001, p. 110).

When an auditor is looking for deep alignment these are the kinds of typical analyses undertaken:

1. Outcomes (objectives/standards/student expectations, etc.)

   • The objective content is aligned to the range of content that the high-stakes assessment purports to evaluate (a backload, meaning working from the test to the curriculum);
   • The cognitive type (verb) of the objective (what) is aligned to a variety of cognitive types that might be tested through the high-stakes assessment item;
   • The objective incorporates multiple contexts in its description, derived from a possible range of test item contexts.

2. Assessment

   • Assessment of the objective incorporates multiple contexts that can be predictive of high-stakes tests.
   • Assessments are aligned to the range of content, context, and cognition requirements of district learnings that have embedded in them high-stakes tested learnings.

3. Resources

   • Congruence of the resources content with the range of backloaded objective(s) content is evident

- Congruence of the resources contexts with the variety of backloaded objectives(s) is evident
- Congruence of the resources cognition requirements with a variety of back-loaded objective(s) cognitive types is evident

4. Strategies

- Congruence of the activity/strategy content with the range of backloaded objective content is evident
- Congruence of the activity/strategy contexts with the variety of backloaded objective contexts is evident
- Congruence of the activity/strategy cognition requirements with a variety of backloaded objective cognitive types is evident

5. Other types of analyses

- Possible content bias with respect to gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, age or religion
- Whether content is authentic, i.e., objectives are at the real world level using Bloom's (1956) original taxonomy
- A review of cognitive types of objectives/standards using Bloom's (1956) original taxonomy
- An analysis of multidisciplinary or parallel objectives or connected, nested, sequenced, shared, webbed, threaded, integrated, immersed or networked examples.
- A review of the expectation of a mastery learning differentiated approach, using diagnosis to determine which students receive which objectives at the appropriate level (Downey and Steffy 2009, pp. 5–15, 16).

The growing awareness that alignment is more than a simple matching of test content to curriculum content (see Squires 2005, pp. 57–85) has pushed workers in the technostructure to create ever more detailed curriculum work plans that reduce slack but following Galbraith's (1973) model, increase the capacity to process more information by investing in alignment documents that enhance vertical alignment across grade levels and schools, and create improved focus (and uniformity) within grade levels. The result is the growing sophistication, specificity and length of curriculum documents being developed in school systems today at all levels (see Webb 2002).

Examining Test Scores: The Achievement Gap and Years to Parity

State and federal accountability mandates have included more and more testing in the public schools (Mathews 2006). And increased testing in the schools is endorsed by politicians on both sides of the aisle as well as such powerful groups as the Business Round Table. In fact, Edward Rust, CEO of State Farm Insurance

company and chair of the Roundtable's Education Task Force once remarked that "…large organizations such as schools 'don't change because they see the light; they change because they feel the heat'" (Emery and Ohanian 2004, p. 38). Despite a rather sordid history of racism, social class and gender biases (English 2002; Freedle 2002; Young 2003), tests are being used to punish and reward schools for improved scores, and the Obama administration's "Race to the Top" agenda includes linking improved test scores to teacher pay (Viadero 2009).

When approaching sketching out assessments/tests used in a school system auditors examine policies and regulations related to assessment expectations; the relationship of the district's assessment expectations to any state or national assessment and local assessment expectations; samples of data presented to classroom teachers, building principals, board members, parents and the general public; descriptions of how data are to be used at the various levels and for what purpose; trend data of both external and internal student assessments and program evaluations administered over the past several years and how the data analysis and findings have been disseminated; any cohort and subgroup data the auditor can determine if appropriate for longitudinal analysis; major district-wide grants and their program evaluation reports. The auditor knows that the purpose of reviewing all of the data is not ultimately to report it all in a report, but following the principle of "materiality" present only that which he or she believes will actually make a difference in student learning (i.e., that which is material or relevant).

Audits generally graph student testing patterns over two or more years and point out differences by gender, race and SES (socio-economic status) where available. They also do an analysis called "years to parity" based on those scores. An example is shown in Table 49.1.

In this example, for 4 years the schools with more than 50% students of color showed gains. If 2009 was not an anomaly, the average gain was +0.5 and at that rate it would take 13.2 years to gain parity, thus erasing the achievement gap. This procedure is a straight forward approach to determining if, everything remains the same, how many years would it take for the gap to cease to exist. It also sets the stage for determining if or what interventions might be considered to speed up the rate of progress.

Table 49.1 Number of years to parity in mathematics achievement on hypothetical state test for the third grade

Percent proficient or advanced proficient by year					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Schools with more than 50% students of color	91.6	94.3	95.2	95.0	87.8
Schools with less than 10% students of color	83.0	86.1	90.5	88.9	81.2
Difference	8.6	8.2	4.7	6.1	6.6
Year to year change		0.4	3.5	−1.4	−0.5
Average year to year change					0.5
Years to parity					13.2

The characteristics of adequacy for judging an instructional approach in this regard is determined by looking for the following information or procedures in a school district's documents and asking the following:

- Do they present teachers with formative achievement data for incoming students at the beginning of the school year? Are data from the prior year(s) assessments reconfigured so that the teacher receiving these new students has the data on each of his/her students?
- Do they identify for the teacher both individual formative student data on each objective for level of achievement and where each student is within that level each time formative district assessments take place?
- Do the data include group or subgroup levels of achievement for a given concept/standard?
- Do they present to the teacher individual formative student achievement level by objective connected to a district's schedule of objectives or pacing chart?
- Do they present longitudinal data for each student by class roster and specify the required gain needed to close any identified achievement gap to move each student to be on grade-level learning within the life of the student in school?
- Do they identify pre-teaching formative student assessments to use for individual student diagnosis for one or more years, allowing teachers to determine when students are making desired progress over time (Downey and Steffy 2009, pp. 8–17).

Audit Paradoxes

There are two paradoxes contained within the model of the curriculum audit and these are closely embedded in audit ideology which parallels the narrative of the machine bureaucracy. The first pertains to the matter of internal control. The second is that the more perfect the machine the more system controllers are likely going to encounter resistance from teachers. At issue is the desire for teachers to control their own spaces and this aspect comes into conflict with the need of the system for tighter connections vertically and horizontally within the overall system of schools in order to be responsive to the imposition of centralized testing and the requirement that all students be at the same point at the same time (see Lortie 1969).

The other paradox within this approach has been identified by Thompson (1967) in his discussion of the paradox of administration which is related to "the dual searches for certainty and flexibility' (p. 150). What this means for a school system is that while within the strictures of machine bureaucracy functions can be reorganized and more tightly connected, it must still allow for flexibility in the application within the classroom because all students are rarely at the same place at the same time. The system still expects the classroom teacher to adapt the learning of the curriculum by taking into account pacing, sequencing and time commitments. This translates into the need for flexibility and continued autonomy, though more tightly defined than before.
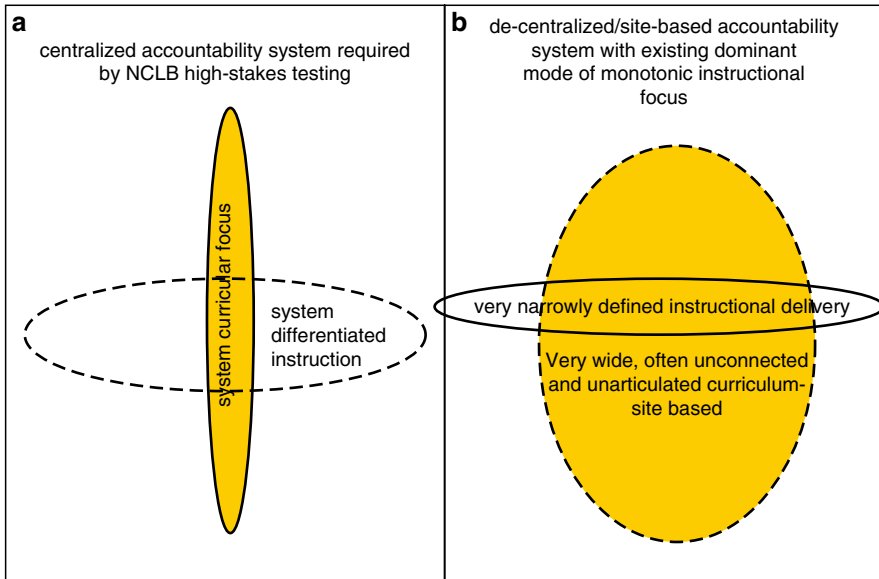
Fig. 49.2 The paradox of organization within high-stakes testing

Figure 49.2 shows what type of organizational configuration is required to meet Thompson's "paradox of administration." School system A is the one required in which the curriculum is tightly defined, but that instruction, defined as the application of that curriculum in classrooms, is highly differentiated and contingent upon the discretion of the classroom teacher to deliver effectively. This is the only way, within the machine bureaucracy ideology, that the "paradox of administration" can be resolved.

School Systems as Agents of Social Reproduction: The Role of Pedagogic Text

The biggest drawback in using curriculum management audits is that the process is confined to school system operations and so it reduces the dimensions of what schools do to a technical examination of internal system functions, roles and the existing division of labor. The audit is a good fit to the dominant managerial model (the machine bureaucracy) of US school systems. So the audit examines what exists. Because the dominant managerial outlook is also technocratic in nature, managerial functions are thought not to include tackling larger social inequities which exist in the socio-political-economic systems of advanced capitalism. While some school superintendents may lament those inequities and know that many of them are reflected in the test scores in the form of the achievement gap, very few are prepared to re-define

schooling to change the larger socio-economic system which perpetuates them. When superintendents speak about the benefits of the audit they say things like, "I used the audit to focus the district on its mission, curriculum and instruction, and student learning, which it did" (Vertiz 1995, p. 249). Another superintendent said, "The audit gave us some real solid, practical recommendations – things we could implement and a sense we could get in control" (Vertiz 1995, p. 250). Another superintendent commented, "…we needed to make every dollar count. Although it is called a 'curriculum management audit,' the way it's done, you get a very comprehensive look at the district in general – not only the way the instructional programs are aligned and effectively operating, but what can be done in the future to make the system the best it can be with available money" (Vertiz 1995, p. 252). Although one superintendent confessed, "I was there for only a short period of time when I realized the inequities that existed for black students, and I realized that no new superintendent was going to bring about that kind of change by him- or herself" (Vertiz 1995, p. 257), both the role of the superintendent and the perspective of the audit confine their responses to internal system adjustments which have shown themselves to improve student test scores. In the case where school system operations challenge the dominant political values and threaten the privileges of those elites who exercise power, the push back to overturn such operations can be demonstrated. A recent school board election in Wake County, North Carolina, overturned a long standing award winning diversity program when two conservative businessmen and long-time Republican Party backers gave record amounts of money to elect a new board majority to abolish it (Hui 2010).

The work of Bernstein (1996) suggests a different form of possible analyses. While Bernstein agrees with the notion that schools reinforce the existing social class system, his research is an examination of "the inner logic of pedagogic discourse and its practices" (p. 18). It is only to a limited extent that the curriculum management audit examines this discourse, mostly in its standards regarding equity where disparities in performance on standardized tests are graphed by gender, race and sometimes SES (socio-economic status). The audit also examines disciplinary practices and some curriculum course enrollments by race and gender where such information is required by the federal government's Office of Civil Rights. Bernstein examines school system operations around a completely different set of questions. Virtually none would be asked in the curriculum management audit, and few superintendents or school boards would pay anybody to have them answered because they suggest a completely different culprit in considering the achievement gap. Here is what Bernstein (1996) asks:

1. How does a dominating distribution of power and principles of control generate, distribute, reproduce and legitimize dominating and dominated principles of communication?
2. How does such a distribution of principles of communication regulate relations within and between social groups?
3. How do these principles of communication produce a distribution of forms of pedagogic consciousness? (p. 18).

Asking and answering these questions far exceeds the scope of the curriculum management audit which is a process which would bring the whole concept of power and domination of what Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron 2000) has called "the cultural arbitrary" into very sharp focus. It would question the entire political authority structure which governs schools. Bourdieu (1984) sees schools and the curriculum in them as defined by the social class elites who think that their tastes and choices are the best and even "natural". They fail to recognize that curriculum and the schools in which it is embedded are social constructs perpetuated by political power. And as they confront the inevitable fallout in the hierarchy of learning success in which race, gender and social class are the near universal fault lines, they mis-recognize both the cause and the solution to that learning success hierarchy. Few managers of machine bureaucracies would see their own power as part of the problem. Even fewer would change it. The real issue is not more efficient operations, but defining a new form of organization based on difference and not standardization. While auditing is possible within these new dimensions, it would radically shift all of the standards and indicators away from control and predictability to ones focusing on human growth and development which are anathema to the near universal values, form and functioning of public school systems nearly everywhere in the world.

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Chapter 50
Leading School-Based Networks and Collaborative Learning: Working Together for Better Outcomes?

Mark Hadfield and Christopher Chapman

Introduction

This chapter focuses on school-networks and collaboratives and sets out to address three questions. First, what structures and processes are associated with school-based networks and collaboratives? Second, why get involved in networks and collaboratives? And third, what are the leadership implications for developing effective school-based networks and collaboratives? Drawing on the responses to these questions, in conclusion, the chapter outlines a framework for leading networking and collaborative learning.

The emphasis on professional learning communities that permeates much of the North American literature through accounts of national initiatives such as the Annenberg Challenge (Reyes and Phillips 2002), district-based initiatives such as the British Columbia Network of Performance Based Schools and professional networks such as the National Writing Project is where some of the richest descriptions of how networks impact on teachers knowledge, beliefs and classroom practices is located. Indeed, as far back as 1996 Liebermann and Grolnick in their study of 16 US educational reform networks were commenting that:

> We found that these networks were attempting to shift the meaning of adult learning away from prescription towards challenging involvement and problem solving. They tried to achieve goals of participant learning and professional competence by modelling different modes of inquiry, supporting the formations of teams to create and write school-based plans for change, finding mechanisms to encourage cross-role groups to work together, focussing deeply on particular topics, and inviting the participants to help shape the agenda in their own terms. (Lieberman and Grolnick 1996, p. 9)

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Within education the term network has been applied to professional networks of individuals that can span a local area or whole country (Little 1993; Lieberman and Grolnick 1996), or networks of personal relationships within a single school (Bryk et al. 1999). Even when applied specifically to networks of schools it can appear that it is applied to groups of schools with very different foci. For example, Wohlstetter and colleagues (2003) in their study of Los Angeles networks focuses on the role of joint problem solving in drawing schools together into networks.

> A network… is a group of organisations working together to solve problems or issues of mutual concern that are too large for any one organisation to handle on its own (Mandell 1999). Applied to schools, the idea of networks suggests that schools working together in a collaborative effort would be more effective in enhancing organisational capacity and improving student learning than individual schools working on their own (Wohlstetter and Smith 2000). (Wohlstetter et al. 2003, p. 399)

The OECD Lisbon Seminar (2003) drew on research into professional learning communities to define 'Networked Learning Communities' in terms of knowledge transfer, professional learning and their position between central and local educational structures:

> Networked Learning Communities are purposefully led social entities that are characterised by a commitment to quality, rigour and a focus on outcomes…. They promote the dissemination of good practice, enhance the professional development of teachers, support capacity building in schools, mediate between centralised and decentralised structures, and assist in the process of re-structuring and re-culturing educational organisational systems. (OECD 2003, p. 154)

The sheer plasticity of the term 'network' means that it has been applied to a wide range of school-to-school and school-to-university collaborations. It is therefore hard to differentiate networks from various other forms of collaboratives, partnerships, alliances and consortia. In our research we have therefore adopted, and slightly adapted, the expansive definition used by the authors of currently the only systematic review of the impact of school networks on pupils,

> Groups or systems of interconnected people and/or organisations (including schools) whose aims and purposes include the improvement of learning, (or learning opportunities), and whose structure and organisation include explicit strategies designed to achieve these aims. (Bell et al. 2006, p. 29)

Our argument is that all networks share a set of common features in that primarily they have some form of structure that supports key processes and together these define the nature of any network. A school network is therefore essentially a combination of structures through which participants can be brought together to engage with each other and the processes are what they are engaged in when working as part of the network. During the life time of a network, structures and processes will develop symbiotically creating and defining possibilities. It is through influencing and directing this symbiosis that school leaders can shape the development of their network. That is not to say that leaders initiate all structural and process developments. During the life of each network there is an evolutionary process that encourages the emergence of new initiatives and new leaders. The role of leadership is to harness, adapt and occasionally 'dampen down' what emerges on the basis of preferred network goals and the key issues they face.

Structures

Network structures are probably the most popular way of distinguishing networks from other organisational forms. Church et al. (2002) use a 'fisherman's net' metaphor to describe the structure of a network of individuals. A fisherman's net is based on threads which are knotted together. In a network of individuals the 'threads' that link people together, and represent the 'soft' part of the network structure, are the relationships, communications and trust that links people. The 'knots' provide the 'harder' part of the structure and are the activities that bring people in the network together, meeting and events. Church's metaphor stresses the interaction of these two sorts of structures because it is this interaction that gives the 'net' attains its structural strength. The leaders of school networks therefore have to ensure that they develop both types of structures to hold people in the network and allow them to work the net effectively.

In formalised professional school networks soft structures such as trust and knowledge of each other are supplemented by professional purposes and motivations, for example, by a joint problem or shared professional aim. Similarly the knots that hold these threads in place can be a wide range of activities from planning meetings, to working groups, or cross-school research teams. Leaders of networks need to ensure the interaction of these 'hard' and 'soft' structures create the potential for focussing and harnessing the energy and passion of those in the network to bring about collaborative learning that impacts within classrooms.

School networks also require structures that interact with, and between, the internal school structures that organise what happens within individual schools. These structures, such as network conferences, cross-school meetings and inter-visitations provide the means to develop the 'soft' aspects of the network structure that bring people together, the professional relationships, while at the same time creating the 'hard' structures, the knots which provide the opportunity for joint working and effective collaboration.

Processes

Whenever people in any form of network, social or professional, come together, some form of interaction takes place. In social networks, such interactions may be little more than amiable conversations around a shared interest or experience. These interactions can become more complex exchanges as individuals swap expert knowledge about a hobby, exchange local knowledge about good places to eat and barter goods and services. Social networks are often marked out by this multiplicity of interactions each arising out of sets of individual interests. In contrast, professional networks are marked by more limited sets of interactions based on specifically designed processes aimed at achieving professional rather than social outcomes. It is the nature of these processes, and the intentions behind them that distinguishes a school network from a social one. School networks tend to be for the

most part about creating differing forms of professional learning and joint working opportunities. The challenge faced by network leaders is as we discuss in the next section ensuring that learning opportunities result in changes within classroom, and that these classroom-based changes permeate the network rather than simply residing in one or two rooms of the network enthusiasts.

What Structures and Processes Are Associated with School-Based Networks and Collaboratives?

The second section of this chapter outlines two of the main 'structural' challenges faced by leaders of school-based networks and collaboratives. Leaders are often working along a continuum of structures ranging from 'lose networks' where there is an agreement to undertake some form of joint activity to full 'integration' where those involved merge into a single leadership and governance structure, effectively merging the partners into a singe organization (Sullivan and Skeltcher 2002). A network of schools will therefore have a range of processes that will have varying degrees and types of structures embedded within them in order for them to work effectively.

However loose or integrated the network is leaders are faced with the challenge of establishing and integrating a range of shared learning experiences, through joint professional development activities, and joint working, such as planning together, to undertaking collaborative change, such as working on curriculum innovations and practitioner enquiry. This requires the development of both vertical structures, that reach up and down the established hierarchies in schools, and horizontal structures, that connect individuals and groups within and across schools.

Our argument is, in common with research on communities of practice (Wenger 1998) and professional learning communities (Stoll and Seashore Louis, 2007), that effective collaborative learning occurs when four key processes are in place and are effectively intermeshed both vertically and horizontally within and between schools:

- Leadership
- Co-ordination and administration
- Joint learning and practice development
- Knowledge and practice transfer

The leadership activities within a network therefore need to take place at differing layers and groups within a network and is therefore distributed in both an organisational sense (Harris 2009) as encouraging leadership at all levels but also in a more sociological sense (Spillane 2006) as a collective phenomena that is 'stretched over' groups. The leadership activities within a network in many respects do not differ from leadership with schools requiring leaders to provide vision and direction, develop the leadership of others and establish norms for guiding behaviour and identifying and allocating roles for other to take on. What differentiates leadership within a network is the need for brokerage between schools and the key challenge of engendering participation within the network and mobilising others to work

collaboratively. Building both the soft and hard structures vertically and horizontally will mesh the net together and give it strength.

Leaders within networks have to stitch together these differing structures to ensure the right forms, quality and scope of participation.

> Participation is at the core of what makes a network different from other organizational or process forms. Who participates (issues around power, and resources), how they participate (issues about relationships, coordination, facilitation, governance) why they participate (issues around vision, values, needs, benefits, motivation, commitment), and for how long (issues around sustainability). (Church et al. 2002, p. 14)

Leaders care for the 'net' by looking after the relationships and interactions that form it, and they work the 'net' so that the network functions effectively. This means that they have to deal with the issues around power and resources so that there is a degree of equity in who participates. They need to look at how people participate and support relationship building and aid better communication and co-ordination within the network. They also need to help participants reflect on and articulate why they are involved, or should get involved, in network activities. To do all of this they need to understand aspects of group dynamics, how to build trust and consensus and how to understand equality issues.

Mobilising and encouraging collaborative activity is based on developing trust so that network members feel more confident in each other and are therefore happier to collaborate. Trust has been described as 'the glue that allows control to be relinquished into the hands of those will act in the best interests of all' (Church et al. 2002, p. 1). In social network analysis, and social capital theories more generally (Coleman 1988), trust has been regarded as important in relation to issues ranging from offering emotional support to the transfer of knowledge (Adams and Lamont 2003).

Leaders can develop trust in a number of ways but key is the development of a shared identity. Identification-based trust (Sheppard and Tuchinsky 1996) has been seen as central to networks in political movements where a common ideological position, with its mixture of a shared analysis of a situation and collective sense of what needs to be done, creates a strong bond of trust. 'Identity-based trust makes it possible for a person, group or firm to permit a partner to act independently – knowing its interests will get met' (Sheppard and Tuchinsky 1996, p. 145). This requires leaders within networks to develop processes that build shared understandings of the network, the aims it is trying to achieve and how these reflect the issues differing schools face.

One network leader neatly summarised the initial leadership challenged they faced,

> Seven different schools with seven different sets of priorities, seven different development plans, and what you're trying to do in one network is prioritise one thing that goes across the whole system. (Co-leader, NLC, 2004)

Building identification and developing consensus is based on constructing a framework within which different groups can work together. Leaders in a variety of contexts face the challenge of building such frameworks across very different organisations and groups. Some of the most influential research into how leaders

attempt consensus building took place in studies on 'new' social movements, such as environmental or local campaigns. This is because leaders of such movements have to bring together often fractious smaller organisations into a broader movement to achieve the social changes they seek. Snow et al. (1986) in their research within social movements identified a combination of four leadership practices that underpinned consensus building;

- Frame bridging – providing information to those already disposed to your cause so that they identify with it.
- Frame extension – where the boundaries of the cause are expanded so that they encompass the agendas of potential recruits.
- Frame amplification – this places emphasis on the compatibility of the values and beliefs of the movement with those of potential members.
- Frame transformation – involves changing the views of potential recruits so that they aligned more closely with change agenda being laid out.

Leaders at differing places and spaces within the network need to be involved in these consensus building activities. The strategic leadership of the network though face a challenge in ensuring that those working the net do so in a way which does not create one of the commonest problems, we have found in our research within school networks and that is 'leadership shearing' (Hadfield 2007). Shearing occurs when leaders in network build strong horizontal bonds between schools but only weak vertical bonds between them and others in the network. This often leads to a situation in which groups of leaders at differing levels have created strong structural connections, both hard and soft, between themselves so they are functioning effectively across the network. They fail though to recognise that other individuals and groups are still caught up on the strong vertical organisational structures within their own school hierarchies. As differing groups of network leaders develop their collaborative agendas and joint working they can put into tension network and school structures. This can lead to the different layers of network leadership breaking apart from each other as they shear off and developing their own sense of what leading the network means and what they see as its agenda. As these groups of leaders are not connected by strong enough vertical structures in the network to bring other groups along their direction of travel either the constellation of leadership within the network begins to break apart as different groups spin out of each other's orbit or very different degrees of network activity happens within individual schools. These leadership shearing forces if not dealt with in time can lead to the disruption of the whole network. Therefore, network leaders need to ensure that there is a balance between the horizontal and vertical structures within networks especially where they interact with school structures.

Strong horizontal but weak vertical structures can result because of how network leaders' lateral agency (Hadfield 2007), their capacity to work across school boundaries and engage with colleagues in other schools to change their practices, develops in practice. Our research has shown that lateral agency tends to be easier for individuals to exert over their peers who work in similar positions in other schools. Partially this is a matter of opportunity; groups in the same position within an

organisational hierarchy have similar patterns of workload and availability. There are though strong cultural ties between peers who can identify with others who share similar responsibilities and problems, which can also make collaboration with them intrinsically worthwhile. Strong network structures form around the horizontal links between individuals. What this means though is that networks develop many peer-to-peer structures at differing layers, but very few strong connections across these layers. Those charged within the strategic development of the network therefore need to pay attention to generating vertical linkages, both soft and hard. This might be solved simply by ensuring across school working groups contain individuals from differing levels of each school's internal hierarchy or it might involve challenging strongly held cultural convictions about who it is 'worth' collaborating with in another school.

The second key 'structural challenge' is linking processes of joint learning and practice development within networks so that the network as a whole is affected. This will mean that collaborative professional development activities and joint working result in deep changes that affect what individual teachers do in their classrooms, and also result in widespread change across the network. Failing to structurally link these processes can soon undermine belief in the potential of the network to facilitate real change and it becomes side lined as an activity for a few 'cliques' who are given the opportunity to work together. The key to achieving this is to build in evaluative activities and quality assurance procedures at each key stage but not to develop so tight a structure that the network develops into a 'meetings culture' that dampens enthusiasm or to loose a structure that allows for a thousands flowers to bloom but none of them to propagate.

The first point at which evaluation and quality assurance procedures need to be built in is during the identification of what members' of the network already know about an area of network activity. Failing to do this can not only result in a great deal of wasted effort but more corrosively can result in network activity trampling over on-going development in individual schools. If this occurs it can quickly lead to resentment amongst staff about the network and its activities. Next they are needed to determine the effectiveness of existing approaches to professional development and how these can be developed in ways that are appropriate for the differing groups and schools in the network. This will ensure that professional development activities or joint working will draw on the explicit and tacit knowledge already within the network and align the learning processes with membership needs. Evaluative activities should not be restricted to the learning needs and current approaches to professional development; they also need to consider how effective such activities are in transferring practice and the impact this has on pupils' learning.

How loose or tight these quality assurance or evaluative structures need to be in order to ensure effective practice transfer and dissemination requires leaders to balance issues of co-ordination and management with those of creativity and ownership. We have described this balance as 'the flight path', a path on which the frequency of meetings, events, and processes interact to generate further connections while maintaining cohesion amongst those involved. If a network becomes too highly structured and insufficiently productive, whether in terms of new learning
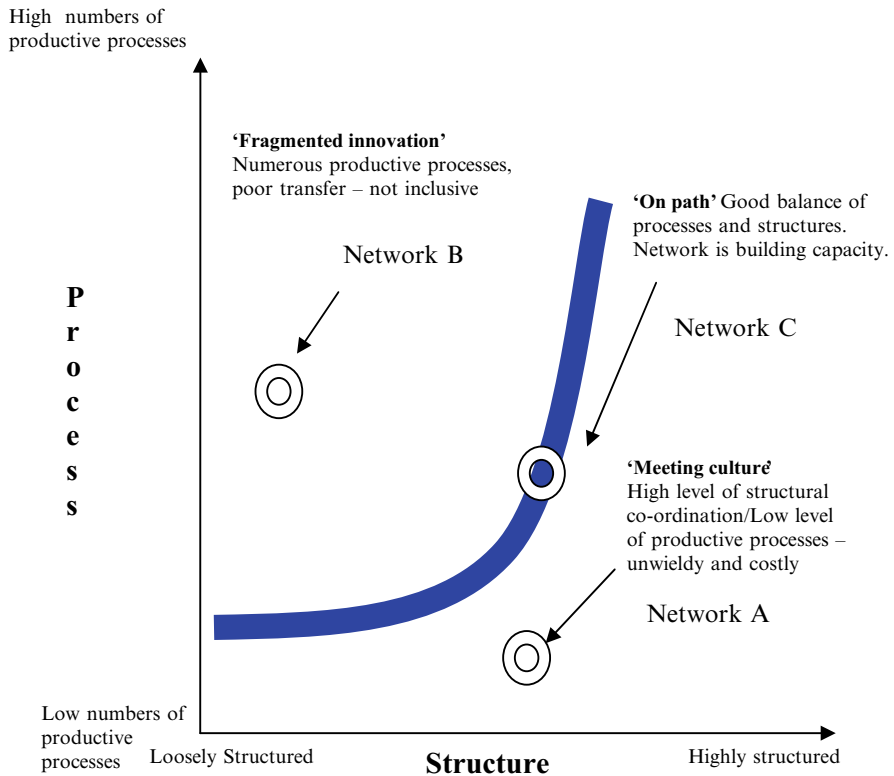
Fig. 50.1 A network flight path

or transfer, then the network devolves into a meetings culture with few outcomes. If it is highly creative, but there is insufficient integration and co-ordination, a great deal of energy is dissipated for no sustained impact.

In Fig. 50.1, Network A has fallen into the problem of overemphasising co-ordination rather than developing productive processes. This means that network members meet frequently but quickly descend into administrative and 'business' activities with little emphasis on new learning. In contrast, network B has multiple learning processes going on which are highly engaging for a small number of enthusiastic staff. Unfortunately, there is insufficient co-ordination to allow learning to be shared between the different groups or in a concerted manner back in school.

> There are little bombs going off every day. The task in the next 18 months is to embed it and widen it, and it's got to be co-ordinated. It's made a difference to us and it's made a difference to our children but it's got to make a difference everywhere. (Lead learner C1–106)

In contrast, network C has got the balance right between the co-ordinating structures and learning processes. They can co-ordinate an increasing number of learning and connective processes without increasing greatly the amount of structures in place.

Keeping on the correct 'path' and getting the balance right is particularly important while establishing a school network. Schools cannot afford the 'luxury' of too much individual learning which does not make an impact back in the classroom, nor can they waste time and energy in too many meetings. The external accountability systems which surround schools will often need to be convinced of the worth of any collaborative activity and this, and other pressures, leave them with little room for error in how they engage in networking.

Why Get Involved in Networking and Collaboration?

What are the motives for getting involved in networking and collaborative activity? Drawing on contingency, exchange political economy and resource dependency theory, this section argues there are a range of motivations for engaging in networking and collaboration. Sullivan and Skeltcher (2002) argue that these theoretical constructs underpin a range of perspectives on networking. They argue that those holding a positive perspective (underpinned by exchange and regime theory) and collaborative empowerment can see the broader picture and engage in collaborative activity through a sense of altruism and desire for systemic rather than organisational gain, in contrast to those holding pessimistic perspectives (underpinned by resource dependency and political economy theory) and preoccupied with exchanging resources to maintain the status quo. The alternative to these extreme perspectives is the realist perspective (underpinned by evolutionary theory) where the optimistic and pessimistic perspectives co-exist and the changing environment defines the purposes and context for collaborative activity. However, it is argued that these perspectives, especially given the pressures of quasi-markets which exist in many systems, must be put to one side and decisions must be made on the basis of evidence of impact (an area where some networking initiatives have been slow to recognize) on teachers and ultimately student outcomes within and across organizational boundaries. The final part of this section reflects on the available evidence relating to the impact of networking and collaborative activity on outcomes and identifies where further research is necessary to enhance the knowledge base.

Possibly the strongest evidential basis that networks impact upon pupil achievement is provided by Bell et al.'s (2006) systematic review of schools networks from 1995 to 2005. As previously mentioned, this review took a broad definition of what constituted a network but came to the following conclusion on reviewing some 119 studies before focussing in on some 19 international studies, and categorising them as having high to low levels of impact;

> Eleven studies investigated and reported pupil impact. … We found six studies where the networks' impact on pupil attainment and/or achievement and engagement was high. Five of these were targeted at improvements for SEN, at risk or minority students. Attainment gains included significant improvements in pupil progression and employment rates, overall public test score increases, increased academic achievement in core subjects gains for project students in reading, language and mathematics. … Two studies were found to have medium attainment impact. In one, the network narrowed the gap between minority

and non-minority students and between economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. The other found student achievements were mixed, but included a 'steady increase' in performance in maths and science; steady improvement in grade scores on non verbal tests and an increase in students' reflection and responsibility for their work. In terms of achievement and engagement one study found greater pupil involvement in school clubs and after-school activities; an increase in pupil self-confidence and self esteem, an improved attitude to school and increased attendance. (Bell et al. 2006, p. 53)

This systematic review highlighted that in terms of measurable outcomes on pupil achievement, the more effective networks had more specific and narrower aims and targeted their efforts on particular groups of pupils. To what extent this finding arises because it is much easier to measure the impact on smaller groups of pupils is beyond the scope of a systematic review. What can be deduced is that in part these outcomes came about because of the nature of the projects included. A significant proportion of these were focused on groups of pupils with specific needs or who required a level and kind of support that it was difficult for certain schools in isolation to offer, such as the most socially excluded or underachieving students. The review highlights how in some cases it would have been difficult to see how these impacts could have been achieved without a network. What was apparent was that certain schools struggling with intractable social and educational issues benefited from working in a network. Part of the success was due to how networks of schools were more able to mobilize a wide range of resources and expertise, often in short supply when dealing with parents and local community groups.

Is there any evidence of networks impacting more broadly than on the most excluded of pupils? Within the UK there have been a number of networking initiatives funded by central government. They have tended to be focused at the two ends of the achievement spectrum, and have ranged from providing support mechanisms to under-achieving schools to trying to harness the expertise and capacity of successful schools (Chapman 2008). Again the most robust evidence, because of the pressure to provide funders with evidence of impact lies within those studies that have targeted inner city pupils. A recent review of 17 different UK networks working in a mixture of inner city and complex and challenging circumstances led to the conclusion that:

The pupil impact evidence in the case studies, and the broader reviews, supports the argument that well-led and appropriately structured collaboration between schools facing complex and challenging circumstances helped their leaders to balance short term pressures to improve pupil attainment with long term desires to improve the educational experiences of their pupils and the engagement of their communities. (Hadfield and Jopling 2006, p. 3)

This review identified evidence of global improvements in attainment across whole networks at both primary and secondary level. Even within those networks that showed such global improvements, variations in rates of improvement between collaborating schools were often apparent. Variations not only reflected the dynamic and unpredictable contexts they worked in but also shifts in the internal capacities of schools that affected their ability to benefit from any collaborative activities. The most significant benefits were in those areas that individual schools found it difficult to do on their own. That is where individual schools lacked the

resources or expertise to overcome a particular challenge, when they faced an issue which was too large to deal with on their own or they faced a challenge which is based within the relationships between schools and local communities. The most recent wave of network-based initiatives in the UK has arisen in part because of the challenges set out by the Every Child Matters' agenda and the need to provide better co-ordinated education opportunities requiring schools to become part of multi-agency and cross-phase networks (Chapman et al. 2008).

The impact of school networks on practitioners arise not just because they find it motivating to connect with others outside of their school, it also seems to improve the overall quality of the professional development on offer. The evidence that networks provide improved professional development opportunities is spread throughout numerous evaluations and research accounts. The major benefits for staff of these changes can be drawn together into three main themes.

- Improved access to local, national and international expertise
- Enhanced ability to innovate and inquire into ones own practice
- Supporting and structuring professional development opportunities so they result in changes to classroom practice.

Improved access to expertise might be as low key and specific as arranging for 'opportunities for sharing good practice with subject specialists in neighbouring schools' (OfSTED 2003) to a high profile international expert launching a school-wide reform activity. By creating economies of scale networks make it economically viable to hire in external expertise. They can also provide the structures that bring together groups of practitioners and provide the facilitation they need to learn from each others insights and understandings.

Networks are fertile grounds for developing practitioner innovation and inquiry into their own practices, and just as importantly the practice of others in the network. This ability can also operate at a number of levels. In numerous instances school and teacher networks have been constructed around partnership with universities or forms of 'intermediary organisations' (McLaughlin and Talbert 2006) which have provided formal training and on-going support to practitioner research and inquiry. For example, the Bay Area Schools Reform Collaborative in the US has over the last ten years been supporting 'Cycles of inquiry' amongst its networks of 87 Leadership Schools (CRC 2002).

The final and possibly most significant impact on staff of being involved in a network is that it helps convert new professional learning into new practices. This can result in fundamental change. Networks appear to be able to do this because they simultaneously improve the quality of professional development and support the transfer of knowledge and practice. The argument here is threefold:

First, networks can provide not only a wider professional development offer but one that has more meaning for staff and is more likely to meet their needs and this greatly improves the chance of them making changes to classroom practice.

Second, network structures and processes can underpin those forms of collaborative professional development that have been shown to be particularly effective in terms of affecting classroom change.

Third, networks can create a critical mass of activity that sustains innovation and widespread change across numerous classrooms and schools.

The evidence that certain forms of networks can substantially improve practitioner's engagement within their own professional development is spread across the research on networks, from the evaluation of the Network Learning Programme in the UK (Sammons et al. 2007) to the National Writing Project in the US (Leiberman and Wood 2004). Working with others in a network has also been shown to provide greater opportunities for self and collective reflection on practice (Deloitte and Touche, 2000) and tends to increase engagement with more challenging and interactive forms of professional learning (Lieberman and Grolnick 1996). All of which is set within the broad base of evidence of networking's ability to enhance morale and reduce professional isolation (Hopkins 2000; Toole and Louis 2002; Hargreaves 2003; Sliwka 2003; Chapman and Fullan 2007). This improved engagement comes about for a range of reasons but vitally important is the voluntary nature of networking which means that staff are more likely to opt into professional development opportunities that have strong personal and professional meaning.

The third and final claim is that networks are not only structures that support collaborative professional development but they also create and sustain a critical mass of activity that supports individual changes impact across numerous classrooms and schools. A number of factors within networks come together to enable innovations to go to scale. First, as we discus later, the very nature of networks is that they often come together because of a shared professional issue or interest and so built into their fabric is a desire to learn from and with each other. These mutual aspirations form the basis of their ability to create a critical mass of activity that can take an innovation to scale. An ability further enhanced by the make-up of networks that bring together schools with different areas of expertise and capacities. Second, practitioners in networks that are based in a specific locality have the opportunity to learn from peers working in similar types of schools and working with 'their' sort of pupils. This is a situation which can overcome many of the cultural and psychological barriers to transferring.

Networks as structures can help overcome a number of threats to the sustainability of any change. They can do this by quickly building 'internal' capacity within the network at various points so that the loss of a key individual does not stall a development. By acting as a 'reservoir' they can help overcome the problem of a short-term influx of resources and support that can quickly dissipate once external funders turn their attention to other issues and new priorities. A network can also sustain change by providing additional leadership capacity. School networks often create new 'middle' leadership roles which sit between the network and school structures and that try to ensure that network activity results in classroom change.

In summary, the evidence that networks impact positively upon staff can be found not only directly within the research and evaluation literature around networks but also indirectly in the broader literature concerned with collaborative professional development and the sustainability of educational reform. As with the evidence about pupil impact it re-enforces the message that networks need to be effectively led, structured and organised around meaningful interactions. Therefore, in conclusion we offer a framework for leading school-based networks.

Towards a Framework for Network Leadership

Network leadership requires leaders to pay attention to: creating the conditions that nurture trusting relationships within and across organisations; mobilising participation by acting as network activist and broker, and perhaps most importantly building structures and processes to facilitate collaborative learning and practice transfer. The leadership of networks requires not just brokerage and gap-filling in terms of leaders having the ability to broker between individuals, or to act as 'gap-fillers' (Burt 1982) or 'go-between leaders' (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967). It also requires them to manipulate the structural properties of their networks to disrupt existing assumptions, critically assess existing norms and practices, and deal with 'homophily' (McPherson et al. 2001), the tendency of individuals to work mainly with others they see as similar to themselves. It also requires leaders to be able to co-ordinate the development of lateral and vertical structures and to draw in resources from their own and others' professional networks. It therefore requires an expanded notion of agency, which to date has not been clearly articulated, that stresses the disruptive and creative side of network leadership as much as previous theories have concentrated on co-ordination and linking the efforts of others.

We would argue that when the leadership of networks is concerned with collaborative learning it needs to focus on the following elements: *understanding context* – developing a detailed understanding of the context; *defining purposes* – providing leadership to foster coherence and clarity; *analysing evidence* – identifying existing expertise and gaps in knowledge; *taking action* – to spread existing expertise and generate new knowledge. This process involves network leadership teams working through a number of questions within a cyclical process as presented in Fig.50.2 below.

We believe this type of approach is likely to release untapped potential through the identification of existing expertise, the generation of new expertise and the transfer of expertise across classroom, departmental and school boundaries.
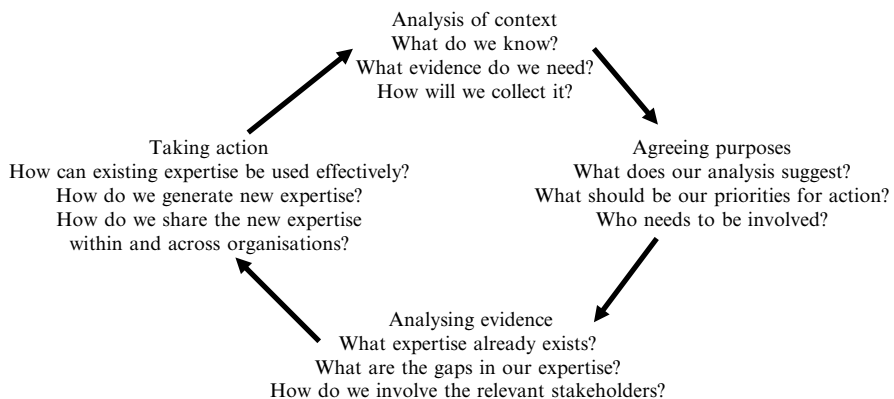
Fig. 50.2 A framework for network leadership

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Chapter 51
Principals Think Organisation: Dilemmas in the Management of Today's Education

Peter Henrik Raae

Introduction

This chapter deals with the way a range of transnational trends has influenced the concept of educational management over the past 20–30 years. It demonstrates how these trends are brought together in a complex discourse of modernisation consisting of a number of conflicting forms of reasoning, which destabilise the perceptions of school and the school's task. The fragmentary nature of this discourse of modernisation presents schools' management with tasks that increasingly seem to involve deciding how best to create those frameworks and limits around school as an institution and organisation that are best able to ensure the school's integrity and allow space for its core activities, namely good teaching. Taking as its starting point a concrete case, the chapter describes how principals attempt to cope with this new ambiguity by setting up a variety of notions about and models for organisation. Using the case study as a basis, the article claims that principals face increasing challenges to their ability to create structurally supported holistic conceptualisations as a defence against the fragmenting pressure coming from the world outside.

The case referred to in the article is the reform of the Danish 'gymnasium' – the upper secondary school in Denmark – during the first decade of the twenty-first century. The case is interesting and even exemplary for various reasons. First, we find in the Danish system those trends that characterise educational systems in developed countries in general. Secondly, we see them impact upon a form of schooling that for several centuries has enjoyed widespread national legitimacy and that to a large extent has been able to set its own agenda. What we have here – seen even against this historical background – is a reform that is both very complex and very compressed. This makes it possible to observe clear institutional fissures and uncertainty in the frantic attempts by school leaders to translate and implement the new strategies. Their actions seem to pose questions about what they are to consider to be their job as head of a school.

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The chapter consists of four sections. The first analyses the way in which trans-national trends in education, translated into national reforms, bring about a pressure for change that points to a number of different directions. The analysis presents a framework for understanding how, when the pressure for change comes up against the institutionalised school, it presents a challenge for principals. The second consists of an empirical study of ways in which principals perceive the organisation that might best be able to cope with the ambiguity that follows the pressure for change. The third section discusses the risks involved in the relevant organisational models. The fourth puts the issues in a perspective that poses new questions about the role of the school leader and that claims that the importance of the leadership aspect of the role is increased.

Educational Management and Leadership: Leadership for Learning

The controversy as to how to delimit the concept of leadership seems to be inca-pable of reaching a conclusion. Yukl, therefore, quotes Stogdill in concluding a large-scale study by saying that there are by and large as many definitions as there are people who have attempted to define (Yukl 2006: 2)! Bush, on the other hand, finds that three dimensions appear to make some sense when discussing leadership, namely influence, values and vision (Bush 2003). If we accept this as a pragmatic point of departure for a circumscription of the concept, then the three dimensions seem to point towards leading and leadership as being activities associated with what we might call 'higher order' tasks. This makes it possible to distinguish between leadership and management, in that leadership relates to perceptions relating to the organisation as a whole and to its 'direction', while management is more concerned with technical issues such as the maintenance and preservation of organisational events (Bush 2003: 8; Cuban 1988; Gronn 2003: 6). It is, however, primarily an analytical distinction, but it will be useful for an understanding of the dilemmas experienced by school leaders (see also Dimmock and Walker 2005).

We are here dealing with organisations that are under a control that may be weak technically but is strong institutionally (Scott 1998). This means that management is governed less by efficiency than by estimate of what is appropriate. School, and by extension the school's leadership, will be subject to strong normative pressure – in other words, dependent on external perceptions of their legitimacy. On an overall and general level, however, the core processes of the school have to engage with pupils' learning. Leading and leadership must, therefore, be linked to learning values. Educational leadership must have its focus on learning.

In a time characterised by reforms, the stability of learning values will, how-ever, be threatened in that conflicts about them intensify. How, for example, do the professions' perceptions of leadership for learning (MacBeath et al. 2009) fit in with perceptions external to the profession relating to learning, learning outcomes

and learning efficiency? This conflict means that educational leaders increasingly have to feel pressurised in relation to the task of protecting the school's integrity (Moos 2003).

The chapter shows how school leaders attempt to handle this exposure that comes in the wake of the increased interest in political reform by establishing an organisational framework capable of ensuring sufficient organisational integrity.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study takes as its starting point the fact that institutional dependency is a characteristic of education and school. This makes the school's organisation particularly vulnerable to the dilemmas caused by pressure from different quarters. As a result, an institutional theoretician like John Meyer can say that the school's efficiency does not seem capable of assessment on the basis of rational criteria, no matter how these might be established. The school's efficiency can, on the other hand, be assessed in relation to what important groups around it *perceive* as being sufficiently rational, efficient, reasonable, fair etc. (Meyer 1980). In a period characterised by reform, therefore, it is to be expected – as was suggested in the previous section – that the definition of efficiency will be open to dispute. This creates complexity in the everyday life of the school and demands a theoretical perspective capable of grasping this complexity as a matter of institutional practice – in other words, an already established practice enjoying widespread legitimacy in the world at large – that is being subjected to challenge.

In general overall terms I am referring to what Campbell calls *organisational institutionalism* (Campbell and Pedersen 2001). Organisational institutionalism is a culturally and cognitively oriented institutionalism that emphasises the effects of routines, rituals and procedures in determining behaviour and that attempts to see in all situations the actual studied routines, etc. as being embedded in social contexts. Institutions are seen as social practice being repeated because agents act within a set of frameworks that are taken for granted. As a result recognisability is achieved, uncertainty is reduced, while at the same time the routines indicate what people ascribe meaning and value to. As institutionalised actions they comprise both a limitation – what is it possible to think or do? – and a resource – what experiences are already in place, embedded in these routines as legitimate 'scripts' or procedural schemata (Scott 1998; Scott 2008)?

From this point of view institutions are perceived in a broad sense and comprise formal and informal events. First and foremost, they are understood – with their inheritance from Berger and Luckmann (1991) – as *socially* constructed and constructing. In the light of this broad definition of institutions, the division between institution and organisation becomes significant. Organisations make up that portion of institutions that is oriented towards the fulfilment of explicit aims. Organisations are, in other words, institutions that to a greater or lesser extent are built up around formalised hierarchies of ends and means.

Institutional theory is particularly conscious of the reproduction and inertia of institutions, or in other words, how, despite any intentions towards change that might exist, institutions demonstrate a tendency towards reproducing themselves. This happens because existing attitudes and underlying assumptions provide particular routines, procedures and rituals with their legitimacy according to a logic regarding what is 'appropriate'. The logic regarding 'the appropriate' will often stymie conscious and formulated interests working for change. This implies that the assumption of efficiency associated with the formalised aims and means hierarchy of an organisation can be in conflict with established practice that appears legitimate in relation to other parts of the organisation's normative or cultural surroundings. Hence, notions of the loosely coupled or even de-coupled structure of an organisation are central (Meyer and Rowan 1991; Scott 1998).

This chapter refers to reforms and change. I refer, therefore, also to elements of what is called *historical institutionalism*. Historical institutionalism appears to be sensitive to the mechanisms that influence change despite inbuilt inertia. Furthermore historical institutionalism seems to place greater focus upon conflicts and conflicting interests that become visible during periods of change. My reference in this chapter relates primarily to the concept of institutional layering as used in historical institutionalism, which seeks to look in greater depth at the very mechanisms of change.

Thelen describes institutional layering as institutional arrangements that are shaped 'on top of' pre-existing structures (Thelen 2003). In this way coalitions can, so to speak, 'work around' those elements in existing arrangements that enjoy the highest degree of legitimacy or that may simply be taken for granted and therefore be most difficult to change. Without there being any direct confrontation with such elements, transformative effects are nevertheless achieved, because the new events function alongside the old. Gradually, what has been taken for granted is destabilised, and institutionalisation arises. In the current analysis, the concept is used to understand the multi-layered character of the pressure towards modernisation that is being described.

Reforms are borne along by language. They are shaped in such a way that they carry conviction about their rationality. Therefore this chapter is supported, finally, by the perspective of *discursive institutionalism* (Campbell and Pedersen 2001; Campbell 2001). This perspective stresses the linguistic elements involved in institutions. In analyses based on discursive institutionalism, language is given significance in relation to what it enables people to *imagine* and to *do*. As with historical institutionalism, greater emphasis is placed here on power, conflict and change, conflict not only on what is true and what is not but also on who has power or is authorised to utter this truth and thereby destabilise other truths in the field.

Transnational Discourses

This chapter shows, as I have said, how different transnational tendencies gather together into a complex, multi-layered discourse about modernisation, which destabilises perceptions about a particular form of schooling as it destabilises

institutionalised leadership practice. 'Itinerant ideas' are particularly interesting here – i.e., ideas that are powerful enough to spread across national boundaries and sectors (Røvik 1998, 2007, Campbell 2001). As such they appear in the foreground of policy debate as conditions beyond dispute and as items in the shaping of, for example, reform programmes.

I will be directing special attention towards three ideas that have managed to make the journey across national boundaries in the economically developed countries (Røvik 1998, 2007; Campbell 2001). These are three ideas that can be seen in Denmark as constituting a clear basis for change in schools from around the turn of the century. This is true of ideas about:

- School and the knowledge economy (the discourse of innovation),
- The performance school (the performance discourse – efficiency through comparison), and
- The responsive school (the discourse of effectivity – effectivity through freedom of choice).

School and the Knowledge Economy

The linking of globalisation and investment in education and training became an evident element in the discourse of management in Denmark shortly after the turn of the century. In 2002 a new Danish government published a manifesto presenting its educational policy, *Bedre uddannelser. En handleplan (Better educational courses. An action plan)* (Regeringen (The Danish Government) 2002). The manifesto refers to the government's overall strategy for economic growth. Here it is stated that in the global economy the use of new knowledge in innovation is the key to growth and prosperity. *Better educational courses* refers directly to OECD, which has claimed in a number of reports that there is a close link between economic growth in individual countries and education and training (see also Moos 2009). OECD points, for example, to innovative ability and entrepreneurship and to the development of cross-curricular skills (OECD 1996, 2001).

The Performance School

A second central point mentioned in *Better educational courses* is a desire to alter production managed by rule to production managed by result. In this, Danish educational policy is inspired by New Public Management. What we see are quasi contract relations between government and suppliers of services, market relations between suppliers and consumers, and the opportunity for competition between public and private suppliers (see Hood 1991). Management by result involves a focus on indicators of aims and success that should preferably be quantitative even in relation to services of professional human agency. Measurement is supposed to

strengthen the government's ability to monitor the suppliers' performance, to secure data for incentive purposes, to give the suppliers a valid feedback loop and finally to provide data for user information, as shown in the next section.

The Responsive School

A Danish government manifesto of 2002 links welfare and improvement in welfare directly to opportunities for choice (Finansministeriet (Ministry of Finance) 2002: *Velfærd og valgfrihed* (*Welfare and freedom of choice*)). Freedom of choice should be promoted in all welfare areas, even in the area of education. Public institutions have to describe their services, and this will provide users with the necessary tools to arrive at an informed choice. It is at the same time an incentive to institutions to differentiate their services. In the discourse that this manifesto is a part of, central public planning and definition of the needs of the population (that have character-ised the extension of the Danish welfare state since the Second World War) make their appearance as a disenfranchisement of the citizen (Pedersen 2008).

Together these ideas make up a powerful reform paradigm embracing Danish educational courses.

Transnational Ideas and Reform of the Danish 'Gymnasium'[1]

In the following I will focus on how this paradigm becomes established through a programme of reform of the Danish gymnasium. We have just as much right to speak about the problems generated by solutions as we have of solutions generated by problems (see, for example, Cohen et al. 1979, Røvik 1998). It is well known, not least from theories of 'public production', that dominant ideas, current solutions and definitions of problems often go hand in hand (see Harmon and Mayer 1986). It follows that we can claim that the reforms discussed in the following are solutions which 'find their own problems', so to speak.

The first reform is the gymnasium reform itself, which came into force in 2005. This reform presents a very far-reaching set of changes, which makes decisive inroads into institutionalised discourse and practice regarding subjects and teaching.

The second reform dates from 2007 and did not have gymnasium courses as its actual target. The aim was to bring administrative units together into new and larger units. It is, however, important to point out that the reform constitutes an attempt to

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[1] The Danish 'gymnasium' comprises a separate 3-year educational course that is taken after the ninth year of school. It takes place in special schools distinct from basic schooling. There are four programmes – the common gymnasium, the business gymnasium and the technical gymnasium, all of which are 3-year courses. In addition there is the higher preparatory examination (a 2-year course). About 55% of a youth cohort apply for a gymnasium course, of which the common gymnasium, which is the focus of this article, is by far the largest (www.uvm.dk).

embed a number of the paradigmatic elements that have been discussed (Pedersen 2008). For the gymnasium it meant in concrete terms a transition to self-ownership and a form of funding that was dependent on activities (the so-called taxameter system).

In the following, a brief summary of the two reforms will be provided. This will be done with special attention to an analytical reconstruction of the pressure for change that the institutionalised gymnasium was subject to and of the leadership challenges that derive from it.

The Gymnasium Reform of 2005

> Extensive and fast-moving changes in technology and science create new areas of knowledge and skill, which have to be included in thinking about aims and frameworks employed in educational courses, in subjects and teaching, and which increase the need to develop abilities to work independently, both individually and in a team, and across subjects and subject areas. Increased internationalisation in technology, economy, science, culture and education also mean that a realignment of educational courses, development of new professionalism and relevant skills that match the needs of a knowledge society are crucial to determining whether Denmark will be in the lead. (Undervisningsministeriet) (Ministry of Education) 2003, section 1)

These words are taken from the remarks accompanying the bill for reform. It is evident that reference to the idea of school and knowledge economy constitutes a justification for the initiative. The task of the new gymnasiums is to be able to provide the basis for a work force that matches the needs of a knowledge society. In the bill itself the needs of the knowledge society are translated into the key phrase 'study competence'. Study competence is the solution that seeks its problem in educational courses offered until now – namely the students' (insufficient?) ability to satisfy the demand to extend their learning independently and through independent planning. This has far-reaching consequences for the structure of teaching.

Study competence makes new demands both of the interplay between subjects and of the pedagogical methods that promote pupils' self-management. It leads to a reorganisation of the distribution of work and of coordination among teachers. The crucial point becomes teacher collaboration about interdisciplinarity and matters relating to method.

According to the reform, courses are built around specialised 'studies packages'. A package contains normally three subjects that the student has to take. This makes it possible to do interdisciplinary projects. Individual gymnasiums themselves assemble and offer study lines to match the students' choices. This allows individual schools the chance to create their own profile in relation to other gymnasiums.

The 2005 reform presents decisive challenges to institutionalised educational practice, and the way in which it is implemented is also decisive. This procedure contains elements both of decentralisation and deregulation and of centralisation and re-regulation. The tendency can be compared to what Fiske and Ladd name 'tight-loose-tight management' (Fiske and Ladd 2000).

The skills orientation of teaching can be seen as a direct product of the discourse about school and the knowledge economy (Raae 2005; Hobel 2009). In some

respects it means clearer targets for teaching (centralisation), but the way in which the school organises the collaboration required between teachers is left to the school itself (decentralisation).

Performance orientation makes itself felt by means of new legally binding monitoring systems at three levels. Plans are required for the preparation of courses in every subject along with plans for how the school will organise self-evaluation. Finally an act contains stipulations regarding the overall quality and result assessment. Plans and results are published. Indicators used in the national screening of schools are determined centrally. Performance orientation is a mixture of self-evaluation and central quality control – in other words, an expression of both decentralisation and centralisation.

The responsive school makes itself visible through expectations that the school will make itself attractive to its local area through the combination of courses it offers. In this respect the pupil taxameter constitutes an incentive (see the following section). In areas with a certain density of schools this will be felt as a competition for pupils, which the schools have to deal with through their strategic choices (decentralisation).

In this context it is important that the new mix of decentralisation and centralisation is matched at the organisational level. It is at the organisational level that all the ends are tied together. In this context *the institution's organisational aspect will play a conspicuous part.* This indicates a new role for the local school leader.

The Self-ownership Reform of 2007

From having been owned by regional administrative units (*amter* or counties), the gymnasium was transferred into self-ownership. Two novel elements should be mentioned, namely performance-related resource allocation and a structure able to increase the efficiency of principal/agent-like management.

In the first place a taxameter system enables finance to be bound up close to an activity. Every pupil releases a sum of money. This part of the finances is decisive for the school's overall budget and sharpens the school status in a (quasi-)marketplace. Herein lies a decentralisation element. At the same time the system makes schools more politically sensitive. Setting a price – the taxameter – is part of the government's annual budget, which makes it quick and simple to change political priorities from one educational area to another, just as the taxameter can be refined (a particular taxameter, for example, for low drop-out rates). The taxameter system in itself contains aspects of both centralisation and decentralisation.

In the second place a school governing board is introduced with the responsibility for the overall management and maintenance of the institution (Undervisningsministeriet (Ministry of Education) 2006, § 18). This can be seen a form of decentralisation. However, ministerial inspections require that the principal and in time the remainder of the school's management team are paid according to results. Some of the indicators are determined centrally, others are determined by the board.

The Double Reform: Decentralisation and Centralisation

The gymnasium reform of 2005 and the gymnasium self-ownership reform of 2007 are interesting due to the particular blend of tendencies towards decentralisation and centralisation that they represent – what we might call 'regulated self-management' (see, for example, Pedersen 2008). This is, on the one hand, a change that is to enable increased freedom with a view to local innovation and, on the other hand, an increased political and administrative management of aims. All in all, this new management context represents a powerful challenge to the institutionalised gymnasium and its leadership practice, and what is interesting is that the management context in itself also consists of conflicting elements. In what follows this is described by establishing a framework that makes clear the polyphony of the management discourses that currently surround the Danish gymnasium.

New and Old Institutions: The Gymnasium as Four Institutionalisations[2]

The framework is built up around four types of institutionalisations of the gymnasium (Fig. 51.1). These are driven by (a) *Bildung*, (b) academic subjects, (c) the market and (d) politics. The four types are constructed on the basis of analytically generated distinctions – in other words, they are analytical constructs not empirical quantities.[3]

The premise behind the model is that important organisational tensions will be able to be described using the tensions between the model's four 'gymnasiums', and that these organisational tensions constitute a new and unavoidable set of conditions for the top leader of the gymnasium, its principal. For the same reason the model is capable of being seen as a framework for understanding the subsequent study of principals' attempts to deal with the new conditions arising out of the double reform.

The first – and most important – distinction relates to the gymnasium as an institution and an organisation. It is indicated in the two vertical columns (see Fig. 51.1).

The gymnasium can be regarded as *institution*. To see it as such is to focus on identity or, in other words, what ascribes subjective and social meaning and validity to the individual's established practice.

> An institution is a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances. (Olsen 2005: 5)

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[2] *The model is an adaptation of Olsen 2005.*

[3] The various institutionalisations are based on the history of the Danish gymnasium (Bryld et al. 1990; Haue et al. 1998; Haue 2003; Raae 2005) and the legal commentaries that accompany the most significant reforms (reforms of 1963, 1971, 1989 and 2005).

	The institution's processes and dynamics are governed by internal factors	The institution's processes and dynamics are governed by external factors
Decentralised or polycentred perspective	The subject-driven gymnasium Constituent logic Single-subject expertise, interest representation, choice, neogitation between subject groups. Criteria for assessment: Single subject standards. Justification for autonomy: 'Technical autonomy' Change takes place through: Negotiation and conflict resolution and displacement in power relations, interests and alliance. Leader role: The tactical leader. Role of colleagues: Teacher as subject specialist. Organisational principle is negotiation and majority decisions	The market-driven gymnasium Constituent logic : Market-based services for society. Criteria for assessment: Responsiveness in relation to user demand. Financial efficiency, flexibility, survival. Justification for autonomy: Responsiveness, survival. Change takes place through: Selection through competition, entrepreneurship and adaptation, dominating customers. Leader role: The strategic leader. The role of colleagues: Teacher as colleague and innovator. Organisational principle is selection through competition
Central or monocentric perspective	The Bildung-driven gymnasium Constituent logic: Bildung and truth. Assessment criteria: A Bildung based on centrality of perspective. Justification for autonomy: The authority of the learned. Change takes place through: Gradual re-interpretation of institutional identity. Leader role: Primus inter pares. Role of colleagues: Teacher as role model for Bildung. Organisational principle is constituent rules	The politically driven gymnasium Constituent logic: Implementation of preordained political aims. Assessment criteria: The national objectives. Justification for autonomy: Autonomy is delegated and based/dependent on achievement of aims. Change takes place through: Political decisions and priorities made by changing political leadership. Leader role: Implementation through directive. Role of colleagues: Teacher as colleague and loyal executive. Organisational principle is command and hierarchy

Fig. 51.1 The gymnasium between institution and organisation. The figure is inspired by Olsen (2005).

But the gymnasium can also be regarded as an *organisation*. Seen as such, an instrumental view is applied. In this the gymnasium's nature as instrument for the pursuance of predetermined preferences is emphasised. The focus will be on change, on identification of problems and rationalisation of solutions. This perspective relates to management with a view to solving tasks in a manner that is efficient as regards resources, to handle instability and to meet new demands from the world outside.

The horizontal distinction in Fig. 51.1 is one of mono- versus poly-strategic focus. The *Bildung* driven and the politically driven gymnasiums have single strategic perspectives, referring to respectively a national *Bildung* ideal and the parliament. The top row – the subject-driven gymnasium and the market-driven gymnasium – is complex due to the multiplicity of points. In the subject-driven gymnasium the many competing subjects will constitute a poly-strategic perspective as will the heterogeneous character of the market in the market-driven gymnasium.

The model that emerges through this exercise can be read in two ways.

In the first place they can be read *synchronously*. The synchronous reading will focus, for example, on the differences in norms associated with the gymnasiums in the four areas.

The left-hand column is characterised by *dominance of internal dynamics*. Central here will be the practice and routines of the profession associated to norms relating to *Bildung* and academic subject. Change is, therefore, seen either as a gradual re-interpretation of the overall values of *Bildung* (the gymnasium driven by *Bildung*) or as a result of conflicts and struggles between competing subject-based coalitions or epistemological interests (the polycentric subject-driven gymnasium). The underlying organisational perspective will be representative, because the legitimacy of the structure will depend on how well the structure reflects and promotes the norms of the profession.

In a *Bildung*-driven gymnasium the principal will appear in a *primus inter pares* role with the teachers as role models for the pupils. In a subject-driven gymnasium the role of the principal will be as tactical leader – the person who ensures negotiated order between competing subject interests – while the teachers' role will be as academic experts.

The right-hand column, in which the institution's organisational aspect becomes visible, is characterised by the *dominance of external dynamics*. The politically driven gymnasium is organised with respect to the parliamentary chain of command, and the organisation strives for calculability, precision and standardisation in relation to the aims laid down by politics. In the market-driven gymnasium authority is, in principle, linked to the user, and the state, in principle, only makes an appearance as the organ that removes obstacles to the user to enact this authority. In the market-driven gymnasium, innovation and a capacity to adapt are essential to allow a match between the gymnasium and the transitory world of users outside.

In the politically driven gymnasium the principal's role will be as the leader with a directive function, and communication will take the form of commands and obedient response. Complementary to this, the role of loyal executive teacher will be the dominant one. In the market-driven gymnasium the principal is the strategically oriented leader, who has to facilitate the innovative capacity of his/her staff.

In the second place the model can be read *diachronically*. The altered norms and epistemological figures then appear in a temporal perspective. This diachronic reading sees the organisational tensions as being a result of clashes between existing institutionalised routines and new ones in the process of institutionalisation – either as a result of force (through legal or other stipulations), of altered norms or of changes to cultural expectations.

The left-hand column (the *Bildung*-driven and the subject-driven gymnasium) represents an old but still active duality in the Danish gymnasium. The *Bildung*-driven gymnasium perception of *Bildung* is understood as a cultural synthesis of the totality of activities offered by the educational course, and subjects are attributed value according to how their contribution to *Bildung* is assessed.[4] From around the middle of the twentieth century the *Bildung*-driven gymnasium is subject to increasing competition from the subject-driven gymnasium, which is to meet the requirements of educational thinking associated with the industrial society. The subject-driven gymnasium involves an understanding of knowledge that sees the standards of individual subjects as equally ranked areas of expertise.

The two gymnasiums in the right-hand column in the model arise after the double reform. The politically driven gymnasium and the market-driven gymnasium are particularly influenced by the transnational ideas discussed above and of the expression these ideas are given by the double reform. The politically driven gymnasium is constituted by the political management interest linked to the performance trend. The market-driven gymnasium arises out of the interests of decentralisation, 'liberation' for the market and competition in favour of the user.

The model's areas give four different constructions, but ones which also conflict with each other. What is crucial is, however, that all of them are legitimate and can make up different bases for the rationalisation of decisions. The model can be regarded as an expression of the layering phenomenon that surrounds the actual implementation of the reforms. Without doing away with the institutionalised gymnasium and the routines and practices associated with it, new layers are added. What is more, there are also good reasons for claiming that it is, in fact, the resources generated by institutional practice made up of *Bildung*-driven and subject-driven gymnasiums that form the background for allowing the very complex reform to be implemented without substantial collapse. The layering process makes it possible to avoid actual confrontation, because it simultaneously admits both surviving institutional arrangements and new ones, even though these levels, seen from an analytical point of view, lie on a course of mutual confrontation.

Institutional layering does not, of course, mean that opposing forces are resolved. Oppositions are not simply extended into a struggle between an unambivalent for

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[4] Westbury explains the German word *Bildung* in this way: "*Bildung* is a noun meaning something like 'being educated, educatedness.' It also carries the connotations of the word *bilden*, 'to form, to shape.' *Bildung* is thus best translated as 'formation,' implying both the forming of the personality into a unity as well as the product of this formation and the particular 'formedness' that is represented *by* the person. The 'formation' in the idea of 'spiritual formtion' perfectly captures the German sense." (Westbury 2000 p. 24)

and against. Because the positions represent differing but legitimate rationalities, *the agents of the process will actively attempt to establish practices that bring about sufficient cohesion* – in the very attempt to generate a new and not *too* fragmented social recognisability. 'Enacting' of meaningful cohesion (Weick 1979) is, of course, a general phenomenon that takes place everywhere. But, as a result of the new pressure directed at *the gymnasium as an organisation*, we have to assume the pressure on the principal as 'leading person' in this process is particularly enhanced. Whether the new, multiply layered pressure on the organisation results in fragmentation or not will not least depend on the principal's ability to create organisational wholeness and cohesion. There appears to be an increasing demand on principals here *to develop as leaders*.

Principals Think Organisation: An Empirical Study

How, then, do principals deal with the conflicting conditions that the above analysis indicates? An indication of this is provided by a study carried out in 2007–2008. The study came about due to the fact that during the first year or two after the double reform, massive interest arose among gymnasium principals in the restructuring of the organisation of their school. In the study, principals of Danish gymnasiums were interviewed about their intentions as regards this restructuring.

It should be stressed that the study is qualitative. It can say nothing about how widespread the perceptions it reconstructs may be but can indicate solely the *ways* of conceiving the best possible match of organisations based on the conditions laid down in the double reform.

A *common feature* of the interviews is the fact that principals are seeking to underline and make visible their management authority in the new organisation. The principals place all the emphasis on the need for 'room to manoeuvre'. At the same time the principals are conscious and respectful of the critical potential that lies in a highly qualified group of professionals, the teachers. The principals make it clear that, if the new organisation is to work, then the need for strategic planning must make sufficient sense in relation to the professional values of the teachers.

The *difference* between the interviews is, however, just as conspicuous. Three different *positions* can be set up, differentiated by the specific ways they combine a representative and an instrumental view of organisation. Each position contains a *model of organisation,* mirroring this specific combination. The three models, then, are differentiated by their degree of specialisation and formalisation. I have termed them the flat model, the centralised model and the 'managing through the middle' model.

The Flat Model

In the flat model the principal position maintains extensive decentralisation at the level of the professionals while *at the same time* aiming for an extended room to manoeuvre.

The principal's position is characterised by seeking to maintain the representative perspective of the organisation. 'Respect for the professionals' is the motto. The model is both flat and sharp – in other words, it leads to decentralisation and centralisation at the same time. As such it is relatively well covered by the literature of organisation, especially as regards organisations in which a highly qualified workforce forms part of the core processes (professional bureaucracy, Mintzberg 1979). The following quotation from one of the interviews shows the motto mentioned above but also shows how the dilemma is transformed to a question of mutual respect:

> It is important that the teacher's professionalism is not damaged. Lying at a core in all our activity is our identity as teachers. So it still is for me myself. But as principal I am not built in such a way that I sit waiting for the last ship in the convoy. The teachers also have to respect the fact that I make a host of decisions that I wouldn't dream of presenting before the staff council – which, I note in parentheses, I would like to retain, only in a reduced form. For the school is collegiate; it is the teachers who play a role in its image. Yes, I also play a role but basically it is the teachers.

The dilemma between the flat structure and management's need for greater room to manoeuvre is perceived to be dealt with by establishing a sharp division between an administrative and a pedagogical domain. Management aspects are linked to the latter and not to the former. The viewpoint here is that the best and most suitable organisation comes about through a separation of the professional's domain from the numbers' logic of operational administration. An expectation associated with this is that the complicated pedagogical readjustment (required in relation to the reform) is undertaken by the teachers themselves without any interference from the principal.

The Centralised Model

Another position in the sample can be seen in the attempt to make the organisation's vertical lines of responsibility and authority visible through formalisation and specialisation. This model is characterised by differentiated levels between top and bottom. To some degree the interest attached to the position reminds us of the classical bureaucracy described by M. Weber (1948). The principal's position expresses an instrumental view of the organisation – a view that assesses structure on the basis of its ability to pursue specific aims. The tasks of members of the organisation are described in relation to the organisation's hierarchy, and it is important to the principal to attach to specific roles an authority befitting the task. A key concept in the interviews is effectivity in the sense of single-mindedness. The keywords in the interview relate to the functionality of the structure – the underlying assumption is that transparency of the structure promotes functionality and makes the organisation manageable. The following is a quotation illustrating the latter – the need for functionality and manageability as an answer to the new challenges – in particular:

> There needs for there to be a short distance between decision and implementation, and for there to be such close response that problems are solved even before they even develop into

problems – and that is why we made this division in management. If we look at influence in our organisation, then we think about who is to have influence where. The tradition has been, of course, that there was a staff council with opinions about a host of different things. But I want to move the influence over to those colleagues who deal with it.

The sharp distinction between domains that was a characteristic of the flat model is not to be found here in the centralised model. The way to match the alteration in circumstances is by increasing the internal differentiation on the basis of the tasks that are identified, by delimiting and specifying tasks, and finally by delegating formal authority proportional to responsibility. The model operates, therefore, with a large number of management levels.

The interviews and models in the category show, however, that instrumentality is not the supreme perspective but a central one. The collegiate gathering, which is a key element in the representative perspective and is found again in the flat structure, is not entirely abandoned but its influence is redefined and replaced by a number of committees. Even committees are carefully located in the structure according to their task, responsibility and authority, and influence is limited to a specific mandate. This construction can be perceived as an attempt to supplement the asymmetrical communication, command and obey, with alternative forms that take into account interpretation and negotiation, which are clearly linked to the representative organisational perspective. From a functional perspective this should be understood as an attempt to reflect the particular processes in human agencies, where a basis for decision making is only rarely clear-cut (Ackroyd et al. 1989).

Management Through the Middle

A third position can be characterised as a hybrid, even in relation to the model for organisation.

Structurally the model is distinguished by seeking to set up new fora for management. Authority is delegated to committees, project groups or teams of teachers. The authority given the groups is associated with the project being developed. In contrast to the centralised model, the intention is not to describe precisely or to delimit the task of these groups in relation to the organisation's hierarchy – this would not give the group the necessary space for development and innovation. There is an attempt to solve the problems of coordination by having the formal management represented in all fora. In contrast to the previous two models, this model almost makes a point of bringing together pedagogical, administrative and operational tasks. This is done in order to bring about a new and substantively negotiated order between conflicting rationalities whereby the professionals' involvement and commitment are sought.

The position is distinct from the instrumental perspective. The point of view seems to be that the increase in complexity of the surrounding world can only to a limited degree be reduced by means of structure. And, despite the fact that the perspective resembles the representative perspective in the way that the focus is on

the structure's facilitating qualities, it differentiates itself by virtue of avoiding the flat model's division of domains. The organisational cohesion that the model seeks to achieve does not lie so much in the model itself but is conceived as a process. The cohesion has to be recreated again and again in the new fora. A fundamental assumption is that the demands of the new world outside are best dealt with by increasing the individual capacity whereby the colleagues deal with contradictions and conflicts between the competing rationalities of state, the market and the pupils' interests.

In relation to the centralised model, transparency is lost and there is a risk of losing calculability and manageability. This also emerges from interviews with the principals, from which the following is an illustrative quotation - notice how the sentences are put as questions – there are no answers for certain:

> We could easily risk running off into all sorts of tangents with the risk that it did not function as a single whole, with the risk that we would never get a grip on things and with the risk that our means would run out… and who would then see the whole picture?

> How we deal with uncertainty? Well, I'd sooner say that we live with it…

The fundamental assumption, as I mentioned earlier, can be seen in the perceptions of the leader's task. The leader's task appears to be a pedagogical project that applies to the participation of the professionals in management through identification with the strategic aims of the organisation. This intention is formulated with some clarity in the interviews. In the structure of the gymnasium before the double reform the staff council was a central element. In the model of management through the middle this central position may be a problem perceived as a matter of lacking organisational knowledge as shown in the following quotation:

> We have to carry out some reorganisation and some alteration because sparring [in the staff council] has not been sufficiently qualified and because once in a while we hear a blast from the past, as the chairman puts it… when there is someone who thinks that it's just like it was in the old days, when you could just go in and overturn [a committee's decisions] at the final vote. Nowadays fortunately this mostly generates amusement, but it is not only amusing…

Perceptions of Organisation: Intentions and Risks

In the above I have interpreted the positions from which leadership intentions derive in the field of tension between a representative and an instrumental view of organisational structure. In the following lines, I summarise the intentions of the principals as well as the strategic risks connected with the three models – cf. Fig. 51.2. What the positions had in common was the principals' intentions to bring about greater organisational manoeuvrability. But intentions involve differing perceptions of organisation, of the teacher's role in the organisation and of the principal's task. The flat model and the centralised model resemble each other in so far as they seek to shield the professional from the conflicting rationalities of the market-driven gymnasium and the politically driven gymnasium. In the flat model

	The flat structure	The centralised struc-ture	Management through the middle
Organisational perspective	Instrumental and representative – divided into do-mains	Instrumental	Hybrid
Intention	Continuity and sheltering	Promoting transpar-ency and functionality	Increasing teach-ers' capacity
Risks in respect of the organisa-tion's manoeu-vrability	Mistrust of pro-fessional	Strategic tunnel vision	Overload
Risks with re-spect to the pro-fessional	Disconnection	Loss of professional space for discretion	Erosion of the pro-fessionals' norms and values

Fig. 51.2 Organisational structure and principals' intentions

the principal imagines that this happens by distancing these forms of logic from the norm systems of the profession. The task of leadership is seen as *sheltering*. In the centralised model this happens by transferring the pressure coming from the world outside into limited and specific tasks in order to maintain focus. Here the task of leadership is seen as *adaptation*.

The 'management through the middle' model takes a third way. Here the intention is neither sheltering nor adaptation. On the contrary, here it is a question of involving the professionals themselves in dealing with conflicting pressures. By trying in this way to integrate the competing rationalities coming from the world outside into the profession's institutionalised system of norms, the attention of leadership is directed towards the capacity of the professional to undergo change. The principal's leadership task is perceived here rather as a preparer of structures for *internalisation*.

The positions and the associated models are not, however, without their risks. I will focus here on the possible scenarios that stress the risk aspects of the models in two directions – partly in relation to the organisation's strategic manoeuvrability, partly in relation to the norm-based activity of the teaching profession.

As regards the organisation's manoeuvrability, the flat model's greatest threat is that the principal falls short of his/her intention to set up watertight partitions between the pedagogical domain and the administrative domain. To the critical eye the sharp distinction between the two domains will be somewhat vulnerable put into practice. The schools' new status as self-owning institutions and the form of

financing linked to the number of students mean that the schools have to make themselves attractive in new ways. It can be predicted that strategic, market-generated initiatives will make inroads into the pedagogical domain. This can lead to mistrust and organisational disconnection between the management and the 'core of production'.

Both the strength and the weakness of the centralised model is the function given to its narrow and centralised management. It is the task of the leadership here to interpret the challenges to the organisation and to shape structures capable of reducing challenges into tasks. The risk is strategic tunnel vision – that is, the focus will be on known conditions while the new ones are overlooked. On this basis, a centralised structure risks lacking the sensitivity that market-like conditions demand. Inwardly, in relation to the professionals, there will be the risk that the principle of specification of tasks collides with the space for discretion that charac-terises the professional process.

The risk proves different again for the 'management through the middle' model. Here the boundaries of the organisation are opened and the inner structure is made malleable. The position taken by 'management through the middle' does not seem to be a taking of sides in the tension between a representative and an instrumental view of the structure of the organisation. The tension seems to be introduced among and, so to speak, 'inside' the professionals via the fora for distributed leadership that are at the hub of the model. The danger here is overload. When the degree of formalisation is low, it will, for example, be difficult to draw boundary lines for the individual's area of respon-sibility, and the respite that comes with being able to differentiate between role and person will be missing. In relation to the profession the danger could be that the professional obligation towards the client (being obliged to do what is best for pupils) gives way to obligation to meet the local organisation's current strategic targets.

Principals and Leadership for Learning

Alongside the modernisation of education and the institution of school analysed here on the basis of the case of the Danish gymnasium, a new institutional pressure is exerted on schools. The analysis shows conflicting pressures for change between institutional processes and dynamics driven by internal factors (*Bildung* and aca-demic subjects) and processes driven by external factors (the 'market' and politico-economic interests). The particular pressure comes about through schools being set free to a greater degree to act as strategic units in a market, at the same time as there is a political desire for tighter control over educational courses – a control which is based on two different expectations, referring to 'school and knowledge economy' (measuring against the ability to generate new ideas) and the performance school (measuring against what is already known and standardised). The encounter between the conflicting pressures for change takes place on the level of organisation – it is the organisation, not the state or the individual teacher (see Hopmann 2008) that is held responsible for creating acceptable cohesion.

These conflicting pressures, therefore, meet on the principal's desk. The consequence is that the task of management to a greater extent now arises at the intersection between control paradoxes. To respond to this implies *a reinforced focus on leadership* or, in other words, on what we previously termed 'higher order' tasks – leadership like that required to create a sense of wholeness on the part of the organisation.

The case demonstrates the principals' attempts to establish a sufficiently coherent organisation. The multi-layered pressure towards modernisation means, however, that the representative perspective on organisation that takes account of the representation of professional norms and values is put under pressure by the instrumental perspective. It is in this field of tension that principals try to carry out their tasks in ways that allow them to make sufficiently strong links to the rationality of each of 'the four gymnasiums'.

Using their various models of organisation, they all drew a line, so to speak, around the core processes of the school, teaching and learning. As such it is the head teacher's leadership for learning. But there the similarity ends. Is the prime task sheltering of the external dynamics of the outside world? Does it consist of adaptation through the specification of tasks and roles? Or does the task of leadership consist of management of internal processes? Does leadership take place through the principal taking on the role of authoritative protector, as creator of a system of standardised operational procedures, or by facilitating, as a pedagogue, the teachers' responsibility for the organisation's new aims?

The case makes it probable that '*the* acceptable organisation' is a myth. It rather demonstrates a variety of improvisations based on possible perceptions of 'acceptable organisation'. The individual perception of organisation can be seen as a cobbling together or assemblage (Campbell 2001; Weick 2001) that, on the one hand, tries to meet the demands of the contexts of rationality in which the new discourses appear and, on the other, takes as its starting point the resources that make up the established institution – all with a view to generating 'the good enough organisation' as a sufficiently meaningful framework around the participants in the activity of teaching and learning.

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Chapter 52
The Self-Organizing School Theory: Leading Change for Learning

Alan Bain

Introduction

All school leaders are expected to improve or even comprehensively reform their schools in pursuit of better learning outcomes for students. Yet while there are many successful leaders and a body of effective leadership practices (Davis et al. 2005; Dimmock 1997; Walker and Dimmock 2005; Witziers et al. 2003), there are few successfully sustained and scaled-up comprehensive school change or reform efforts (Berends et al. 2001; Gertler et al. 2007; Borman et al. 2003; Levin 2001). This discontinuity invites questions about the technology for change available to school leaders and whether that technology is capable of assisting schools to be more responsive to their teaching and learning aspirations.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe a theory that can be used to design, implement and evaluate major school change efforts. The theory was derived from a 12-year research-practitioner study in a school that employed complex self-organizing systems as a design metaphor. The study, known as the Self-Organizing School (SOS) project (Bain 2007), includes longitudinal efficacy research about its implementation, process, and outcomes. The chapter also presents a rationale for the theory and exemplars of the approach in practice.

The research practitioner approach to the project required high levels of personal engagement and investment by the author creating the propensity for bias that can occur when one individual has such an active and direct role in a change process. Given this knowledge, the case for the theory is built within the context of those needs expressed in the existing comprehensive school reform literature, reconciling the theory with the circumstances of current practice. The results of the project are presented in a similar fashion connecting them to four major points of breakdown in the comprehensive reform of schools. The initiatives

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taken to contextualize this work are not offered as solutions to potential validity threats, rather they emphasize that those threats are recognized and acknowledged and have both influenced and disciplined the discussion of the theory and related research that follows.

School Effects

Over the last four decades, educational researchers have developed a remarkable compendium of practices capable of making a profound difference in the achievement of students (Fraser et al. 1987; Hattie 2009; Marzano 1998). When teachers use these practices they account for up to 45% of the variance in student achievement (Hattie 2009, 2003; Rowe 2003; Scheerens and Creemers 1989; Brophy 1986). However, these approaches do not exist as part of the routine practice of the majority of teachers in the majority of schools (Carnine 1997; Goodlad 1984; Klingner et al. 2003; Lortie 1975; McLaughlin and Talbert 2001; Sizer 1984). The best finding of student achievement effects from the rigorous study of a comprehensive school reform is a modest effect size of 0.2 (Borman et al. 2005). At this time, schools in general seem unable to function in ways that magnify the effect of successful teaching at scale, accounting for just 0–10% of the variance in student achievement (Hattie 2009; Rowe 2003; Scheerens and Creemers 1989). It seems that we know an immense amount about the things schools should do to enhance student learning. Much less is understood about the way those puzzle pieces come together as a curricular, pedagogical and organizational whole.

The longstanding difficulty in bringing more effective and responsive practice to scale is of even greater concern given that much of the underutilized research knowledge available to educators focuses on ways to better respond to the learning needs of the one third of students who fail to experience success in school (Miller et al. 2007; NCES 2008; OECD 2008; Young and Hoffman 2002).

The problem of school effects does not exist because of a lack of effort. Comprehensive school reform has been a goal of the field for over two decades. Much of this work was undertaken in the United States under the guise of the *New American Schools Project* (NAS-1990) and then in 1997 by the *Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program* (CSRD) (USDOE 2002), although large-scale reform is an international phenomenon as reflected by the School Based Management Initiative (Hong Kong), the Getting it Right Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in Western Australia, The Middle Years Reform Program in Victoria (Australia), the Manitoba School Improvement Program (Canada), and the Playing for Success and Excellence in Cities Programs (UK) (Aladjem and Borman 2006; Berends et al. 2001; Cheng 1996; Doremus 1981; Earl et al. 2003; Eastabrook et al. 1977; Elsworth et al. 2004; Fink 2000; Ridley and Kendall 2005; Sharp, et al. 2004, 2005).

The Current Condition of Comprehensive School Reform

The gap between what we know and what we do in schools is a longstanding complex and immensely challenging problem of teacher capacity, acceptance, adoption, cultural understanding, technology transfer, and capacity building (CFTL 2009; Evans 1996; Fullan 2001, 2007; Jones et al. 1997; Little 2002; Papert 1997; Sarason 1982, 1996). Cuban (2009) notes that ideological conflicts over teaching and learning, and political struggles over policy and capital issues, have confounded change efforts and shaped school reform for 150 years.

The large-scale summative evaluation of comprehensive school reforms indicates that they are yet to achieve their most fundamental goal of being genuinely comprehensive (PPSS 2003). The evaluations of individual reforms show that in one form or another they have been unable to provide the professional development required for successful implementation, material support for the development and implementation of curriculum, adequate formative and summative evaluation and feedback systems, support for the change in the professional lives of teachers, genuine educational technology, and the organizational form required to influence the broader management of schools (Bain 2007; Berends et al. 2001; Bodilly 1996; Cicchinelli and Barley 1999; Cook et al. 1999; Datnow and Castellano 2000; Datnow et al. 2000; Faddis et al. 2000; Hodge 2003; Weston and Brookes 2008).

Nearly all comprehensive school reform approaches also offer strategy and resources that are intended to assist schools and their leaders to set a trajectory from initial acceptance to full implementation. Levin (2001) describes the steps in the process as stock taking (needs assessment), forging a vision, setting priorities, establishing a governance model, establishing an inquiry approach to progress the vision, assessing progress, and capacity building. However, research on the implementation of reforms shows that they rarely progress in such a logical fashion (Bain 2007; Dimmock 2000; Franceschini 2002; Fullan 2001).

A number of studies have shown high levels of variability in initial commitment, ongoing instability in the level of support, and an overall diminution in the engagement of teachers over time in their implementation of school reforms (American Teachers Federation 1999; Berends et al. 2001; Bodilly 1998; Datnow 2003). Research on teacher perspectives suggests a miscue between the instrumental expectations of a reform and the disposition of teachers at different times in the implementation cycle (Bain 2010; Schmidt and Datnow 2005). Teachers seem to be much more emotionally focused on the classroom implications of change than on the instrumental issues associated with a reform, especially early in the cycle of implementation (Schmidt and Datnow 2005). Further, research has shown that teachers will reject reform models when they are perceived to be prescriptive and inflexible, even when those models have generated positive outcomes for students (Datnow and Castellano 2000).

Each of these empirical findings exemplifies the non-linearity and unpredictability in the nature of school change. Teachers' beliefs and values about the field and the nature of change, the history of and precedent for professional autonomy,

the ambiguous and contested role of research in practice, the ambiguity around the form and function of collaboration, and variance in the responsiveness to new technologies, all serve to confound incomplete linear sequential models of change (Cuban 2009; Fullan 2007; Goodlad 1984; Hargreaves 1995; McLaughlin and Talbert 2001; Sarason 1982, 1996).

Exacerbating these problems of acceptance and adoption is the failure of reforms to include contingencies for the collection of longitudinal implementation data that could be used to monitor what is going on and adjust or revise their designs (Guhn 2008). When implementation data is available it is rarely based on an objective determination of the fidelity of practice in classrooms (Appelbaum and Schwartzbeck 2002; Bain 2010; Gertler et al. 2007; O'Donnell 2008).

Points of Breakdown

The gaps in reform design and process summarized here have resulted in four major points of breakdown in comprehensive school reform efforts:

1. An inability to generate feedback on the fidelity of the implementation required to adjust, adapt, and grow reforms over time (Berends et al. 2002; Desimone 2002; Faddis et al. 2000).
2. An inability to rigorously alter classroom practice in sustainable ways and at the scale of the school (Berends et al. 2001; Zhang et al. 2005; Muncey and McQuillan 1996; Datnow 2003).
3. An inability to generate achievement effects at the level of the school commensurate with those reported from the longitudinal study of classrooms (Borman et al. 2003, 2005; Zhang et al. 2005).
4. An inability to demonstrate sustained school-wide impact at all levels of the school (Datnow and Castellano 2000; Cook et al. 1999; Berends et al. 2002).

The points of breakdown reflect limitations associated with fundamental aspects of efforts to alter schools including an inability to implement their most basic features and exert an influence on learning. These unresolved issues create the need and opportunity for continued action to develop new technologies for reforming schools. The literature summarized thus far indicates that there are two broad foci for future efforts. The first, to provide leaders with more complete practical and specific guidance and second, to create frameworks that are sufficiently responsive and flexible to negotiate the less predictable aspects of school reform.

The Self-Organizing School Project

What follows is one response to the need for more complete and responsive reform designs in the form of a set of theoretically derived design principles that can be used by leaders as they engage with school reform. As previously noted, the

principles emerged from a longitudinal study entitled the SOS project, implemented over 12 years to build a theory and practice of school improvement and reform.

The SOS project was undertaken in a co-educational independent secondary school (grades 9 through 13) with an enrolment of 350 students. Approximately 25% of enrolled students met the generally accepted classification criteria for the presence of a learning disability (Mastropieri and Scruggs 2004). The overall performance profile for students entering the school approximated that of the average US secondary school on standardized tests of achievement (Bain and Ross 2000).

Two important forces drove the school's initial interest in reform. The first was a desire to become more responsive to the educational needs of an increasingly diverse and challenging student population. The gap between the disposition and capacity of faculty to address learning differences and the nature and needs of the student population was perceived to be widening in ways that were stressing students, faculty, and the school overall. The second was the need to provide a more distinctive and attractive program to parents in a highly competitive independent school educational marketplace. The school's leadership believed that a failure to respond to both of these drivers threatened the long-term viability of the school.

Throughout the project the author served as an agent of change in various capacities that can be broadly characterized in three phases. They are titled with specific reference to change agent responsibilities.

The first, a hands-on *Design/pilot phase* (1992–1996), involved applying a set of theoretical principles to the design and implementation of a reform including a process for school-wide engagement, designing curriculum and software, building teacher role descriptions and a career path, creating an organizational structure for the school as well as making adjustments to the design of physical infrastructure. All of these elements were combined to create a program pilot to test the approach with a team derived from the school's teaching and student population.

The second, *Transition phase* (1997–2000), involved scaling up the pilot process adding new teaching teams, integrating the model with the existing organizational design of the school, and dispersing control for the application and evolution of the design and the theoretical principles. Both the design/pilot and transition phases were included to address the known discontinuity in the acceptance and adoption of change by making it possible for teachers to get involved at a time when they felt ready.

The third, *Consultant phase* (2001–2003), could be described as a period of withdrawal on the part of the change agent from direct involvement to a consultant role. The school and the project in this phase were synonymous.

The fourth, *Continuation phase* (2004–present), describes a period of natural evolution of the school without any external support or intervention from the change agent. These terms are described retrospectively as a general guide to the context and an organizer for the chronology of the project. External evaluations of the school occurred during the transition and continuation phases (NEASC 1996; Weston and Brookes 2008).

Self-Organizing School Theory

The SOS project applied six theoretical principles derived from the field of self-organization and complex adaptive systems (Kauffman 1995; Pascale et al. 2000; Prigogine and Stengers 1984; Waldrop 1992) to redesign the school. Self-organization refers to the way individual agents or participants in systems can pool their collective intelligence working together to produce 'bottom-up' solutions to their needs, drivers, and problems (Merry 1995). In doing so, those agents can transcend their individual capacities and accomplishments.

Self-organization emerges from the ability of a system to execute an overall schema or framework for action (Gell-Mann 1994). This occurs not as a function of a top-down edict or externally mandated re-engineering but as a result of the fundamental capacity of the agents in the system to share feedback and adapt. People trying to meet their material needs organize themselves into an economy. Birds with a mutual goal organize into a flock. The human brain organizes its neurons in response to its experience (Odell 1998). In the natural world, these systems include brains, immune systems, ecologies, and ant colonies. In the human world, they include businesses, cities, political parties, economies, nations, and schools (Johnson 2001; Merry 1995; Odell 1998; Pascale et al. 2000; Waldrop 1992).

The field of education has found self-organization to be an attractive metaphor for change (e.g. Davis and Sumara 2006; Morrison 2002) as it struggles with reform efforts driven at schools from the outside. Innovations like distributed leadership (Spillane 2006), communities of practice (Wenger et al. 2002), devolution, or school-based management (Walker 2002) share an expectation that they will be broadly embraced and implemented, often without a detailed understanding of how that will happen. Self-organizing systems theory focuses on the nature of systems and the interactions among agents, how they work together to adopt innovative practice, and the way a school community may respond to change. In doing so, the broader theory can provide practical guidance for bridging the gap between good ideas or innovative practice and their implementation at scale.

Schema

According to the SOS theory, for a school to be self-organizing it must possess a schema for practice. A schema is a conceptual framework that defines the way we interact with the world (Marshall 1995). The agents or participants in successful self-organizing systems share a schema that makes it possible for them to work together, to identify salient features, and to plan and execute their particular roles within the system (Gell-Mann 1994). For example, a schema permits doctors trained in different places and under different conditions to work together at the site of a natural disaster or fire fighters from different states or countries to work collaboratively to extinguish fire on a large scale (Seel nd; Smith and Fried 1999). Regularities,

common rules, protocols – *their common schema* make it possible for the doctors or fire fighters to work together. These regularities extend beyond the organizational conditions or features of their work. They reflect a shared understanding of professional practice. In professional fields, schema development is not spontaneous or autogenetic but the product of a design process that shapes the professional practice of the field and the organizational forms in which that practice occurs.

A school schema is a framework of shared professional understandings, beliefs, language, and actions about teaching and learning. In the SOS theory, the goal of any school leader or change agent is to work with the community to translate the school's existing vision and mission into a schema that articulates that vision. In a school with a schema, all leaders, teachers, and students share an understanding of, and language for the way teaching and learning happens that includes the terms that the community uses to express its schema (Smethurst 1997). The schema disperses control for effective action, making self-organization possible.

The presence of a schema for practice stands in contrast to the more common autonomous construction of practice that has been shown in multi-generational research to characterize the condition of teaching and learning in the majority of schools (Goodlad 1984; Lortie 1975; McLaughlin and Talbert 2001). Evaluations of school reforms show that they have largely failed to build schemas for practice or substantively alter the autonomous construction of practice in schools, exhibiting much more variability in implementation from class to class within schools than between them (Berends et al. 2001).

From the perspective of the SOS, translating a school's vision or mission into a schema emerges from the application of the five remaining principles of the theory to the reform process. They are: *Simple Rules*, *Embedded Design*, *Similarity at Scale*, *Emergent Feedback*, and *Dispersed Control*. Knowledge of these principles can assist school leaders to understand and ultimately develop the dynamic conditions required for successful innovation.

Simple Rules

In self-organizing systems, remarkably complex behaviour can be stimulated by relatively simple rules (Seel nd). These are the shared 'knowns' that make it possible for the aforementioned fire fighters or doctors to work together. In a school setting, a simple rule is a commitment to practice that serves as a cornerstone of its schema by assigning value and practical meaning to what it believes about teaching and learning. If a school establishes the simple rule – *learning is cooperative* or *decision-making is collaborative*, these simple commitments become the cornerstones of a design process that drives what the school does, the way teaching and learning happens in classrooms, and the way the community is organized. Cooperative Learning (CL), Collaborative Problem solving, and the tenets of any other simple rule are embedded in each and all of the aforementioned elements of a school design.

Developing simple rules involves matching the school's drivers with its needs and culture and then identifying the practices and processes to which it intends to commit. In practice, this is an 'inside–outside' process involving a rigorous engagement by the community in understanding its current condition, its drivers, and needs followed by an investigation of the research literature to identify and validate commitments that can respond to those drivers and needs.

In the SOS project, the school used a 3-month self-study and workshop process that resulted in commitments to collaborative and cooperative practice; student mastery through differentiated curriculum and learning; and ICT to enhance feedback, teaching, learning, and curriculum design.

It is important to emphasize that the SOS approach to simple rule development is not expected to yield immediate universal support for a reform within the school. Reform developers have found, often with unfortunate consequences, that expecting universal support from a workshop, needs assessment, or school visit is unrealistic (Franceschini 2002). In the SOS approach, any commitment at scale is viewed as an emergent phenomenon, building over time as individuals and groups develop a deeper engagement and understanding of the reform. The self-study/workshop process for developing simple rules in the SOS project resulted in a decision to use those rules to frame a year-long design process that ultimately resulted in a small-scale pilot of that design effort followed by a multi-year process of scaling the design up to the level of the whole school.

Embedded Design

Successful complex systems exhibit self-repeating patterns or similarities within their organizational structure (Waldrop 1992). Embedded design in the SOS is the pivotal design step and involves repeating the school's simple rules clearly and unambiguously in its organizational design. It is the way the beliefs and big ideas of a theory are connected to its essential systems and practices (Kuhn 1996).

For example, a school's simple rule and commitment to cooperation makes it possible to investigate and identify research-based approaches to CL that can be employed in classrooms across the school. The research-based characteristics of CL can then be embedded in other elements of the design. This includes school leaders' and teachers' position descriptions, technology tools, professional development, and feedback systems. Reiterated in this way, the goal of embedded design is to bring practical day-to-day meaning to the cooperation rule or any other, helping to build the common understanding and regularity required for a school level schema. The theory proposes that capacity with CL is developed because the practice of CL is explicitly represented in each element of the design and each element is represented in all others. Every time feedback is shared, technology tools are used, or a portfolio is built for promotion, an opportunity is created for learning about CL. When applied to all of the school's simple rules, this reiteration is intended to create an overall design.

The reiteration is also intended to assist leaders, teachers, and students to become conversant with the professional language about teaching and learning necessary for genuine collaboration and self-organization. Embedded design functions to increase the likelihood that a reform is complete, addressing the problems of missing elements described in the comprehensive reform implementation literature (e.g. Bodilly 1996; Datnow et al. 2000).

In the SOS project, the initial year-long design process engaged the community in developing new role descriptions, a new performance appraisal system, a summer school professional development program, along with the initial development of a suite of ICT tools for curriculum design, human resource, and school management. The software development process continued for 3 years.

The application of the embedded design principle was employed to connect research-based practice and the use of ICT in the school. The simple rules were embedded in ICT tools for designing curriculum, for giving feedback, and delivering differentiated instruction. Over 2,000 hours of differentiated curriculum were built in the curriculum software tools. The software included templates for lesson, design, and formats for designing and managing differentiated instruction in all subjects. This process of reconciling research-based practice and software development with embedded design is intended to address the challenges of scaling up ICT-based innovation (Dede and Honan 2005) within and ultimately beyond individual schools.

A 3-year study showed that when the tools were used for delivering differentiated curriculum, teachers employed research-based teaching approaches with higher levels of fidelity than a comparison group of low-level users (effect size.83) (Bain and Parkes 2006). A second, alternating treatments design study showed that mastery improved at statistically significant levels when students used ICT tools to build homework responses in their English classes (Bain et al. 2000).

Similarity at Scale

Self-organizing systems, including schools, are hierarchical and possess organizational levels (Waldrop 1992). Similarity at scale is what happens when the schema is embedded at all levels making a system similar to itself (Gleick 1987; Merry 1995). This phenomenon occurs in the natural world where the coastline, a fern leaf, a snowflake, the outline of a mountain, and a head of broccoli, are all self-similar. They exhibit self-repeating patterns at different levels or scale (Merry 1995).

When applied to the SOS, this principle relates to establishing how the simple rules and embedded design will impact individuals and groups at different levels in the school and how the work of those individuals and groups reiterates the rules and the schema.

In the SOS project this involved embedding the simple rules in position descriptions for students, teachers, teaching team leaders, school leaders and teams, and embedding those rules in the feedback tools used by each group. As a result, teams of students used the same approach to collaboration in their classroom learning and

problem solving as teams of teachers responsible for a year or grade level. The process for giving feedback to a member of a school management or leadership team emphasized the same priorities (the simple rules) as the feedback shared with a beginning teacher. Where the beginning teacher received feedback on the use of CL, the leader was evaluated on the quality of the feedback they provided about CL. In this way, the similarity at scale principle is intended to work reciprocally with embedded design ensuring that design features are repeated at different levels across the school. Applying the similarity at scale principle addresses the need to ensure that a reform meets the needs of all stakeholders at all levels of the school and assures widespread participation in the process.

Emergent Feedback

According to Pascale et al. (2000), feedback is the way a complex system talks to itself. In successful complex systems, feedback can be viewed as a network of constant exchange among individuals and groups referenced to the system's schema, which is constantly revised as a function of the feedback exchange (Waldrop 1992). This approach stands in contrast to the more common use of feedback in schools for time-dependent purposes (e.g. grade reporting, external evaluations, probation decisions, etc.). Feedback makes it possible for participants in the system to develop their capacities and for systems to produce self-organizing solutions (Pascale et al. 2000).

Feedback is termed emergent because it provides the information necessary for everyone involved in the school to fulfil their day-to-day roles as they relate to the school's schema, to determine what to do next. Teachers and administrators observe classes, write reflections, and give feedback on the work of their teams. Students access information about their performance, and give feedback to teachers, while the contributions of all individuals are constantly aggregated to provide immediate feedback about teams and the school as a whole.

The information collected by, and about students, teachers and administrators is first and foremost an articulation of the school's commitments to practice, to its simple rules and is never targeted solely at the summative performance of any individual (Bain 2005). It is employed to evolve the schema and the effectiveness of the school overall, by amplifying successful activity and dampening actions that are unproductive (Johnson 2001). The intended result is an evolving and dynamic order where the revision of the schema results in an overall benefit to the system (Gell-Mann 1994; Waldrop 1992; Johnson 2001). Examples of the use of emergent feedback include, teams reviewing their use of the curriculum model and student progress, administrators reviewing the quality of feedback given to teams, the revision of software tools, and individual teachers making presentations to their teams based upon the ongoing feedback they have received about their professional practice. The intent in every case is to employ emergent feedback to ensure that issues, successes, and needs surface in a timely fashion and in doing so enable the

kind of mid-course correction required to address the inconsistent adoption and dogmatic and fading implementation of reforms reported in the literature.

Most schools do not allocate extensive resources to the development of feedback systems. In the SOS project, relational database technology was employed to develop a low maintenance ICT solution that included electronic surveys, observation tools, reflections, and reports that could be accessed by all members of the school community in a timely fashion (Bain 2005; Bain and Swan In press). The tools made it possible for feedback to be shared on a 'just in time' basis by individuals, teams, and the school as a whole throughout the year.

Dispersed Control

Dispersed control is what happens when a school possesses a shared schema and its agents are capable of self-organizing behaviour. In the SOS project, the dispersed control principle was expressed in the development of a team-based approach to school organization. Teams became the venues for the work of the school, embedding the school schema at multiple levels in student, teaching, and management teams. The teams were networked, each fulfilling specific roles and responsibilities to each other for addressing student needs and progress, responding to ongoing technology issues, developing curriculum, managing career advancement, and scaling up innovative ideas and practice. The network of teams engendered *small worlds* where professional friends are likely to be the friends of other professional friends (Barabasi 2002) making it possible for individual teachers to engage in constant formal and informal professional communication as a function of their organizational proximity and their common schema.

The network of teams in the SOS has a levelled structure. Leaders of teaching teams also work together in a team at a management level where their role is to pool the collective intelligence of the teams they represent. In doing so, they build connections that shorten the pathways between all teams, their students, and co-teachers. The result is a heightened opportunity for members of one team to communicate with others because the team leaders represent a link on a levelled network of teams. Like the school schema, dispersed control can be seen as a product of the interaction of the other design principles whereby the simple rules and capacity building enabled by embedded design, similarity at scale and emergent feedback make it possible to self-organize and distribute leadership for the key teaching and learning activity of the school.

A 5-year longitudinal study of team process and faculty collaboration that compared faculty perspectives in the SOS pilot, transition and continuation phases with the averaged responses from 42 other schools showed that faculty felt their work environment was more collaborative, and they spent more time engaged in constructive collaborative problem-solving activity than the comparison schools. Teachers attributed the greater collaboration to the team model in the SOS approach (Bain and Hess 2000).

When applied in combination, the design principles of the SOS theory are intended to assist a school progress iteratively from commitment (simple rules) to comprehensive design (embedded design, similarity at scale) to schema development, implementation (emergent feedback) and ultimately ongoing self-organization and adaptation (also driven by emergent feedback and dispersed control).

Efficacy Research

The term of reference for determining the utility of the theory is the extent to which a school employing the design principles produces different results when compared to prior efforts, and specifically in relation to the four fundamental points of breakdown described earlier in the chapter. A program of research and evaluations studies was developed throughout the SOS project to focus on both the theory and those points of breakdown.

Implementation

The emergent feedback principle of the SOS theory is intended to create the conditions to address the first and most fundamental point of breakdown in comprehensive school reform, *the inability to generate feedback on the fidelity of implementation required to adjust, adapt and grow reforms over time*. The application of the emergent feedback principle along with the development of feedback tools made it possible to generate a model of ongoing feedback in the SOS project. Teachers, students, and school leaders contributed 1,612 classroom observations; 12,560 student evaluations of teachers; and 1,346 peer, self, supervisory, team, and management surveys over 5 years. The surveys pertained to the community members' perspectives on key features of the SOS approach, while observations focused on the integrity with which teaching approaches were employed in classrooms. The over 15,000 pieces of feedback represent the ongoing product of teachers' sharing with each other, supervisors and peers observing and reflecting upon lessons and students giving feedback to their teachers on an ongoing basis (Bain 2007). Data gathering was ongoing and shared with the whole community as part of the routine conduct of the school and the emergent feedback process.

The body of implementation evidence associated with the implementation of the emergent feedback process exceeds all current benchmarks in the comprehensive school reform literature for determining the fidelity of implementation including the many cases of external evaluation, and builds a strong case in support of the emergent feedback principle and in the capacity of the SOS design to monitor its implementation.

Altering Classroom Practice

The classroom observational data gathered as part of the implementation process were employed to address the second point of breakdown in comprehensive school reform, *the inability of reform designs to rigorously alter classroom practice in sustainable ways and at the scale of the school*. The 1,612 fifty-minute formal observations of all 114 teachers in the SOS project were employed to determine their use of the key pedagogical approaches associated with the design (i.e. CL, explicit teaching, peer-assisted learning) and classroom engagement. The study examined whether teachers were using the specific research-based features of those practices that served as the cornerstone of the school's schema. This included, by way of example, whether explicit teaching incorporated guided practice (Hunter 1982) and whether CL included task structure and mutual interdependence (Slavin 1996). The results of that study showed that average implementation integrity over the 5 years for those key features of the teaching practices ranged from 73% to 92% in 925 hours of observation. The use of the body of practice improved year over year to a highly acceptable 90% level in years 3–5.

The high levels of practice fidelity reported here, while not the product of a controlled study, stand in contrast to the highly variable and subjective reports of implementation in the existing literature. The finding of high levels of practice fidelity was corroborated by an external evaluation also involving classroom observation conducted in 2008 (Weston and Brookes 2008). Overall, these findings suggest that the design was able to rigorously alter classroom practice in sustainable ways given the reported levels of practice fidelity and the knowledge that none of the teachers involved in the SOS project possessed a detailed understanding of the pedagogical approaches prior to their involvement.

Achievement

The third and possibly most troubling point of breakdown in comprehensive school reform is the apparent inability to markedly improve student achievement. This point of breakdown was addressed in an 8-year cohort study that compared the SAT-1 performance of students who did not experience the SOS design, with those who did (Bain and Ross 2000). Questionnaires from students sent to school teachers gathered as part of the SOS project school's admission process were used as a covariate in the study. No statistically significant differences were found between the two cohorts at entry to the school based upon an analysis of the recommendations. Students who participated in the SOS program scored an average of 92 points higher on their combined SAT-I than students in the pre-SOS program. Students with a learning disability scored 89 points higher. The effect size associated with performance improvement in the SOS designed program was 0.58 for combined SAT-1 scores and 0.70 for the combined scores of the students with learning disabilities. These findings compare

favourably to the average effect size range of 0.15–0.22 for achievement reported in the comprehensive school reform implementation literature (Borman et al. 2003, 2005). This finding is especially encouraging given the difficulty undertaking comprehensive school reforms at the secondary level (Lachat 2001).

Sustained Impact

The data generated by the emergent feedback tools were employed to address the fourth point of breakdown described in the literature, *an inability to demonstrate sustained school-wide impact at all levels of the school*. The data derived from surveys of peers, students, observations, leadership feedback, and teacher reflections were examined over 5 years to determine the extent to which the perceptions of different stakeholders at different levels of the school covaried when a subset of the aforementioned classroom observations were employed as a criterion variable. While there was some variability in the perceptions of different stakeholder groups over time (Bain 2010), teachers, students, and school leaders all reported high levels of fidelity, with respect to the implementation of pedagogy, the differentiation of instruction and collaborative process, those areas that reflected the simple rules and were cornerstones of the school schema. The average rating of key stakeholders at different levels indicated that they believed the key features of the design occurred in a range between 'mostly and always' (3–4 on a four-point scale) and was consistent with the practice fidelity levels derived from the direct observation of classes (Bain 2010; Bain 2007).

Support for the Theory

The implementation integrity data derived from the use of the SOS feedback system along with the aforementioned findings of the ICT and collaboration studies indicate that the project was successful in translating its *simple rules* into a design (*embedded design*) and then to widespread practice at the scale of the school. The high levels of classroom implementation recorded for CL were observed for peer mediation, explicit teaching, math mastery teaching, and engagement (Bain 2007). The development of the curriculum and feedback tools, and their sustained use over time, support the realization of the technology simple rule and the embedding of those tools in the school's design.

The implementation of the collaboration rule was reflected in responses to team and individual surveys that indicated collaboration levels in the order of 3–3.5 on the four-point scale for teams at multiple levels in the school over the 5 years of study, while faculty felt more positive about collaboration than colleagues in other like schools. During the same time period 35 teachers advanced in the school's career path, while all 114 teachers participated in the school's

summer professional development program. Each of these outcomes provide evidence of the way the simple rules and embedded design principle were enacted in the curriculum, organizational design, ICT, the human resource model, and professional development approach.

Evidence also exists of the way in which the embedded design principle was scaled up to develop the roles of students and teams at different levels. This was described in the theory as *similarity at scale*. The responses to items on the feedback tools for students, teachers, leaders, and teams were similar at different levels in the school. The widespread use of those tools at student, teacher, and management levels and the data they generated support the view that the simple rules and the design scaled up to all levels in the school.

The body of data, and the way it was collected and used, lends support to the application of the *emergent feedback* principle. The data described in this chapter show that it is possible to gather more extensive objective longitudinal evidence of comprehensive school reform over time. It would be particularly difficult to gather this amount of data in a school over the time period described unless its purpose was deeply embedded in the day-to-day activity of the school. Further, the survey data from teams indicate that feedback was employed to monitor the teaching process, problem-solve curriculum implementation at team meetings, and to identify strengths and needs related to the curriculum design.

The convergence of feedback from many agents and groups at many levels can also be seen as evidence supporting the existence of a school *schema*. The perceptions of those different agents in the system at different levels and in different groups were highly similar. Irrespective of the source or form, the feedback data converged around a consistent picture of what was occurring in the school. The consistency and regularity in the 15,000 responses of agents and groups described when combined with the achievement effects and outcomes of the achievement, collaboration and ICT studies described in this chapter would be highly unlikely in the absence of a common framework for action in the school.

The final and central question about the theory pertains to whether the design produces self-organizing, emergent behaviour. Evidence of support for the *dispersed control* principle and self-organization focuses on three areas. First, the feedback from teams would suggest that they were actively engaged, bottom-up, in the work of self-organization as reflected by the data on team processes and collaborative problem solving. Second, implementation integrity, as measured by the classroom observations, improved or was sustained over the three phases of the project. The survey responses throughout this period indicated that teams were able to implement the design as reflected in their high scores on items about implementing effective practice, instructional problem solving, effective use of technology, and professional growth. Third, over this period the student conduct, teacher transitions in the career path, achievement and college placement, all improved (Bain 2007).

The quantitative evidence of the instantiation of the design covaried with numerous anecdotal examples of self-organizing behaviour. They include the delivery of the project's professional development program by teachers who had progressed to the Master Teacher level in the school's career path and replaced

external presenters, the development of hundreds of curriculum units, the evolution of the curriculum development model by faculty, and greater engagement of faculty in the management of the career progression approach. A more complete discussion of the anecdotal exemplars of self-organization can be found in (Bain 2007). Collectively, these actions produced a range of new design features and an evolution of the school schema.

Limitations

It is important to recognize and acknowledge the limitations associated with the data and research and evaluation methods presented in this chapter. School reform is by definition a 'messy business' where the clinical assignment of children to conditions in controlled experimental research that relates to their broader school experience is not possible or desirable. The inability to use rigorous experimental designs limits the strength of the conclusions that can be drawn. While the cohort design employed in the SAT-1 study is recommended in studies of organizations with cyclical turnover, it is nonetheless a quasi-experimental approach and subject to validity threats related to the selection and history of participants (Cook and Campbell 1979).

Further, while there is a strong precedent for, and focus on, summative measures like the SAT-1 as an outcome measure in the secondary reform literature, the case for achievement gains would be strengthened by the inclusion of formative curriculum or criterion-based measures of growth (Bain 2007).

The data generated by the indirect measures described here comprise point estimates of the perceptions of faculty about the culture of the school over time and under changing programmatic conditions. The longitudinal data collection over a multi-year period mean that it was also subject to the effects related to normal faculty turnover. For the faculty who participated in multiple administrations of the surveys, a testing effect may also represent a threat to the internal validity of the research and evaluation process. These factors should be considered when interpreting the findings derived from surveys (Bain 2007).

It is also important to recognize and acknowledge the research by Borman et al. (2003) that shows studies conducted '*in-house*' about the achievement effects of comprehensive reform tend to generate higher effect sizes. While a number of the SOS project studies reported in this chapter have been subjected to scholarly review, this is nonetheless a site-based account of a site-based implementation that is subject to the potential bias described in the introduction to this chapter.

Finally, the space limitations associated with a single chapter make the account described here an abbreviated one that may lack necessary supportive detail for the reader to fully interpret the findings. The reader is referred to Bain (2007) for a more complete account of the theory, the content of the measurement devices, efficacy studies, and examples of the self-organizing behaviour that emerged from the application of the theory.

Conclusion

Experienced school leaders know that any major reforms exert a non-linear and frequently unpredictable impact on their schools. Changing a schedule or introducing a new curricular or pedagogical approach has sweeping effects on the way teaching happens, the way time is used for learning, and the way people feel about their roles. Any major change also exerts an impact on a host of school organizational considerations related to non-teaching time, feedback, performance appraisal, and information management. Based on the evidence gathered to date, a strong argument exists to suggest that the current approaches to comprehensive school reform are not yet able to meet the challenges faced by school leaders as they pursue major change in their schools.

It is also fair to say that, given the unremarkable findings derived from the evaluation of comprehensive school reform, the field is experiencing 'reform fatigue' (Kennedy 2009) as the immense effort expended to date has not produced a commensurate return in terms of the sustainability and scalability and effects on student achievement. There is also a view that the problem of school change may be beyond resolution (Papert 1997; Sarason 1996; Berends et al. 2002). Schools may be too complex, so deeply nuanced in terms of school culture and values about practice, and driven by such highly specific contextual factors (Evans 1996; Fink 2000; Hargreaves 1995; van Veen and Lasky 2009) that change of the kind described in this chapter is not possible.

While factors related to context, culture, and contested practice exert an undeniable and profound influence on school change, it is difficult to establish whether they represent cause, symptom, or some iterative combination of the two given the extensive history of incomplete reform approaches that have been rushed to scale in schools (Berends et al. 2002; Bodily 1998; Tyack and Cuban 1995; Elmore 1996). The fundamental nature of the omissions and points of breakdown described in this chapter suggest that we are yet to get to the starting line with a complete technology for school reform. As such, the future of school change and reform may be better conceptualized as an opportune case of unfinished business than an irresolvable problem.

With the duly acknowledged limitations of process and methodology, the findings from the SOS project stand in contrast to the broader experience of school reform in some positive ways and especially with regard to achievement effects, school-wide impact, and the scope and fidelity of implementation. The project represents one example of the role of theory as a design metaphor for reform and signals the importance of smaller more complete research practitioner efforts. The latter can also be viewed as an obvious limitation of the SOS process because of its focus on just one school. However, given the difficulties experienced by prematurely scaled larger efforts, a strong argument exists for building more complete approaches and robust process at a smaller scale in individual schools prior to scaling up to many schools and systems. This more intense work may permit a deeper understanding of both the process and effects of reform that will ultimately yield externally or internally developed models with scalable potential.

When viewed as a collective body of evidence and within the context of existing benchmarks, the SOS project data indicate that a design theory can contribute to better outcomes from comprehensive site-based reform efforts.

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Chapter 53
Building and Leading Within Learning Ecologies

Coral Mitchell and Larry Sackney

With the advent of the learning community concept, school improvement strategies have been linked to teacher learning. The premise of this link is that, as teachers learn, they are better equipped to ignite and energize learning for students. In most cases, however, professional learning has failed to deliver on that promise. Chung Wei et al. (2009) blame this unfortunate outcome on the common delivery of professional development through workshops, lectures, or presentations on some topic or strategy of current interest. This approach, they argue, separates teacher learning from regular school operations, from student learning, and from teaching assignments, and, with little connection between teacher learning and issues of practice, the learning of teachers fails to improve the learning of students.

Although the learning community movement, at implementation, has suffered from similar problems of separation, it holds the potential to integrate teacher learning with all other aspects of school life. To capitalize on that potential, learning communities cannot be implemented as stand-alone initiatives that are organized and managed under specified rules or procedures. Instead, Smith et al. (2009) claim, they should unfold from within the fabric of school life, reflect and respond to the conditions that prevail in the school, and be authentically connected to the daily work of teachers and students.

This sort of deep connection and mutual relationship is at the heart of an ecological perspective. In general terms, the Webster dictionary defines ecology as "a branch of science concerned with the interrelationship of organisms and their environments, especially as manifested by natural cycles and rhythms, community development and structure, interaction between different kinds of organisms, geographic distributions, and population alterations." Under this definition, ecology

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refers to the totality of patterns, connections, relationships, interactions, and mutual influences that emerge among people, their natural and constructed environments, and the forces acting on them. Capra (2002) argues that this perspective is more than a metaphor; it is an elemental aspect of all living systems, and it assumes an epistemology in which the world is knowable through patterns of interdependence and reciprocity. When applied to schools, the ecological perspective draws attention to the dynamic connections, relationships, and mutual influences that impinge on teaching and learning. In each school, teaching and learning are embedded in a context of events, experiences, activities, structures, networks, knowledge, people, histories, interests, resources, artefacts, understandings, and commitments, all of which exert a mediating influence on teaching and learning processes.

Ecological understandings are consequential for school leaders as well as for classroom teachers. Because leaders are involved in building the structures through which schools operate, they are highly influential in shaping the perspective on which the learning community is grounded. In this chapter, we present concepts and strategies that can equip leaders to conceptualize learning systems from an ecological perspective, to examine the mutual influences and interconnections among various aspects of school life, and to frame and reframe conditions so as to enhance and energize teaching and learning. We organize these concepts and strategies around four domains of conditions: cognitive, affective, cultural, and structural. We argue that a reciprocal relationship exists among all these domains, and that a learning ecology emerges when the domains are constructed and led in ways that enable people to make meaningful collective and individual responses to the compelling disturbances in their schools.

Cognitive Conditions

The cognitive domain addresses the arrangements, assumptions, and understandings that define and expand the knowledge, skills, and abilities of educators and students. Conditions in this domain are aimed at building strong, resourceful, resilient learners, and learning is expected to build cognitive capacity among all members of the learning community. From an ecological perspective, the learning opportunities, practices, challenges, and activities that exist in a school are interconnected aspects of a larger learning system, yet that connection might not be obvious to most individuals. It is especially difficult for teachers and students, who typically work in isolated classrooms, to recognize the effects of their own activities on the cognitive conditions operating for others in the school, and to understand the ways in which their personal cognitive capacity is influenced by the actions of others. For this reason, the task of shaping cognitive conditions, and then bringing visibility and coherence to them, is largely a leadership obligation.

To shape cognitive conditions for educators, actions of school leaders are directed toward building reflective practice, critical inquiry, and meaningful and coherent activity. Reflective practice and critical inquiry are two steps in a process

of deconstructing and reconstructing the professional narrative (Mitchell and Sackney 2000). Meaningful and coherent activity is the outcome of that process, as educators come to a sense of what matters in the work they do and align their practices to support learning. This kind of work demands careful, thoughtful, and ongoing attention to the learning of the professionals, and school leaders are challenged to build conditions that will engage the required level of attention.

Reflective practice, which was originally conceptualized by Schön (1983), has emerged in educational circles as the primary tool for professional growth, school development, and continuous improvement (Farrell 2004). Over the years, educational scholars have reframed the concept in various ways, but Schon's framework has retained its energy, and teachers are continually invited to reflect on, in, and for, practice. As Schön originally described the strategy, it is a four-part plan-act-observe-reflect processing cycle that seeks to uncover the positive and negative effects of practice and to inform subsequent activity. Argyris and Schön (1978) contend that a gap typically exists between what we intend to do (espoused theory) and what we actually do (theory in use), and that reflective practice can bring individuals to an awareness of this gap and impel them toward deep, authentic learning that transforms and energizes practice.

However, uncovering the gap can be a difficult and emotional experience, which is why leaders have an essential role to play. As teachers reflect critically on how their students, colleagues, and others respond to them, they often discover that, although some of their practices elicit desired responses, others yield undesirable outcomes, and this discovery strikes at the heart of their professional identity and sense of competence. Leaders can support and enhance the reflective process by highlighting the practices that yielded good outcomes, by noting that everyone generates undesirable outcomes at times, and by framing undesirable outcomes as opportunities to learn rather than as problems. Leaders can then lead the educators into a process of critical inquiry, in which they extend and enrich current effective practices, seek out and experiment with new practices, and continually examine the effects of various practices on the learning of students; on their own and colleagues' learning; and on their professional and pedagogic knowledge, skills, and abilities.

By dedicating professional reflection and critical inquiry to improved teaching and learning, educators face the challenge of bringing meaning to their own activity and to the activities in which students take part. According to Capra (2002), knowledge, meaning, and purpose are intricately linked in the ongoing dance of human sense-making and activity. He describes the connection this way:

> Meaning is essential to human beings. We continually need to make sense of our outer and inner worlds, find meaning in our environment and in our relationships with other humans, and act according to that meaning. This includes in particular our need to act with a purpose or goal in mind. (p. 85)

When knowledge and learning are understood as active and meaningful responses to people's encounters with information through the process of living, they can no longer be viewed as commodities or resources. Instead, Gherardi (2006) assigns them the role of "engaged and self-critical participation in making the world in

which we live" (p. 18). This conceptualization of *knowledge and learning as world-making* gives cognitive capacity deep significance – it is the substance of which the professional and educational worlds are constructed, as it is the substance from which professional practices and learning activities emerge.

Putting the substance to use in constructing a school requires that it have both visibility and coherence, and leaders have the task of showcasing it in a way that serves learning and builds people. One way to do so is to invite educators into meta-cognitive processes. Davis et al. (2000, p. 24) define meta-cognition as critical awareness and ongoing monitoring of one's physical and mental activities, whereas Marzano and Kendall (2007, p. 53) limit it to monitoring, evaluating, and regulating one's mental functioning. In both cases, the authors implicate meta-cognition in thinking about thinking and learning about learning. Leaders engage educators in a meta-cognitive process by posing questions such as: What strategy did you use to [teach that class; deal with that situation]? What were you thinking when you chose that strategy? What effects on the students did you observe? What do you think they learned that you hadn't intended them to learn? What did you learn during the process? What would you do differently/the same next time? Why would you make that choice? Questions such as these not only challenge educators to reflect on their thinking process, but they also bring visibility to the tacit knowledge on which educators rely as they make decisions and teach students. Coherence comes about as educators, individually and collectively, use a broader set of considerations to define, refine, and align practices.

Involvement in professional reflection, critical inquiry, meaningful activity, and meta-cognitive alignment engages leaders in a disturbing function in the school. Capra (2002) sees meaningful disturbances as the triggers for a system to seek out new inputs, and the energizing power of novelty pushes the system to self-organize into new forms with new repertoires of activity. Novelty emerges from the disturbing function when leaders ask people to change teaching assignments, take on new challenges, or to pursue professional learning; when they bring new initiatives and opportunities to the school; or when they challenge teachers and students to push their thinking deeper, to expand their horizons, to move out of their comfort zone, and to abandon the complacency of the status quo. Meaningful activity unfolds as leaders move about the school and ask thought-provoking questions rather than offer advice, solutions, or suggestions; as they raise compelling issues that do not have easy solutions; as they ask how specific tasks build cognitive capacity at the school and classroom levels; and as they bring every idea or initiative back to its effects on teaching and learning. The challenge for school leaders is to express the disturbing function respectfully and appropriately so that the creative energy of new cognitive capacity can inspire teachers and students and ignite teaching and learning.

From an ecological perspective, building cognitive capacity is not simply the accumulation of new ideas, more facts, different concepts, or novel practices. It is, rather, a process of building professional literacy and meaning. In the process, leaders invite educators to learn not just how to ask questions, but also what questions to ask – not just how to find answers, but also how to draw meaning and purpose

from the answers. Leaders ask them to understand the differences and connections between learning (finding out new ideas) and meta-learning (figuring out how to learn); to know whether, when, and how to remove outdated ideas, old information, and past practices; and also to honour old knowledge and practices that continue to meet the challenges of today. In a learning ecology, leaders acknowledge that, at its heart, building cognitive capacity is a deeply textured consideration of a broad array of human, philosophical, theoretical, and practical possibilities for constructing an educational world.

Affective Conditions

Affective conditions deal specifically with the human relationships in a school, and healthy relationships are prerequisites to learning. Their ecological character can be seen in the dynamic and reciprocal influences that cut across individuals and groups. If, for example, students have good relationships with teachers, they tend to learn better, and if teachers have good relationships with students, they tend to teach better. Teachers who feel supported and valued by colleagues, administrators, and parents are more likely to experiment with new practices than are teachers who feel vulnerable or threatened. Furthermore, teachers who feel comfortable and respected in the school have an easier time building comfortable classroom environments for students, and students who feel safe in their classrooms are likely to work respectfully with classmates and teachers. These examples imply that affective conditions, with their ecological nature and dynamic impact, need as much attention from leaders as do cognitive conditions. Leaders are therefore charged with the task of building a safe and supportive learning community, for it is in community that people feel connected, value others, and are valued by others. It is the community that binds individuals together and obligates them to one another.

Building affective conditions can begin with a two-fold process of inviting individuals to participate (invitation) and valuing their contributions (affirmation). Teachers, students, and parents will more readily join others when efforts are made to draw them into collective activities, but some people might need special encouragement and support. Every school, for example, will have some individuals whose sense of self-efficacy is not high, who are new to the school, who might be shy, or who tend to be intimidated by others. Leaders, with their position and perspective, are the obvious ones to extend to these people an explicit invitation to participate in school processes. Following the invitations (special or otherwise), leaders should make sincere efforts to affirm everyone for the contributions they make and to encourage each person to continue with the collective work. In most groups, individuals hold different opinions or positions and bring different understandings or agendas to the table. Through affirmation, this kind of diversity is actively encouraged and authentically valued. Affirmation does not imply agreement or compromise, but it does mean that, even in the face of deep disagreement, individuals can see the value of others' contributions. Affirmation does not happen

by accident or chance, and leaders have the responsibility to help everyone come to a sense of the meaning and purpose in diverse positions and desires. When individuals' ideas are given due consideration, it affirms them as professionals, it contributes to learning, and it encourages ongoing participation in school life (Mitchell and Sackney 2000).

Affirmation and invitation presuppose a high level of trust in a school, but trust is tricky to define or to attain. Hoffman et al. (1994) offer a psychological definition of trust as a "general confidence and overall optimism in occurring events; it is believing in others in the absence of compelling reasons to disbelieve" (p. 486). Walker (2007) links trust to practices of integrity, which she defines as "dependable responsiveness to the ongoing fit among our accounts [of our actions], the ways we have acted, and the consequences and costs our actions have in fact incurred" (p. 122). For Walker, trust develops when people can be relied on to "own up to and clean up messes, their own and others. People who don't beg off, weasel out, or deflect flack toward others as life lurches on, have integrity" (p. 125).

Walker's construction of integrity as reliable responsibility points to a pathway by which leaders can develop the trust that Tschannen-Moran (2001) argues is necessary for building a community of learners. We saw evidence of this pathway in our research in high-capacity learning community schools (Mitchell and Sackney 2009). In every high-capacity school, the principals set the affective standard by modelling a forthright, open, honest, and welcoming personality. They worked hard at being credible, reliable, and honest, and when they made mistakes, they promptly admitted it and made appropriate amends. Because the principals could be relied on to do what they said they would do and to admit and correct their own mistakes, the level of trust between teachers and administrators increased. Moreover, as the teachers grew to trust the administrators, they took on similar practices of responsibility and accountability, which ultimately led to greater responsibility among the students.

This result shines the spotlight on the importance of administrators, teachers, and students serving as role models for each other. From an ecological perspective, collective responsibility is inescapable because, as Capra (2002) notes, all living organisms (including people) are embedded in and continually interacting with their environment. We are profoundly shaped by and in turn profoundly shape the experiences of those who share our space, regardless of whether we or they do so willingly or reluctantly. With the social environment providing the context within which school work happens, each member is obligated to model the kind of affective conditions that support teaching and learning. The most visible and most emulated role models are the school principal and the cadre of teacher and student leaders; they are the ones who set the standards by which the relationships among the various stakeholders (students, teachers, support staff, parents, and administrators) are conducted. Their actions in shaping the affective conditions are especially important in new or difficult situations when the risks are high because, without trust, people divert their energy into self-protection and away from learning.

Affective conditions are also affected by the degree of caring among individuals. According to Whitney (1995, p. 201), a sense of community only emerges when

individuals care about what happens to one another. But caring, as a psychological construct, can take many forms, depending on how different individuals understand the concept. To bring about some consistent expressions of caring, leaders can frame it in terms of deep respect. This construct assumes that people do not have to earn respect; they are owed respect because they are thinking, feeling human beings, and each individual deserves the same treatment that the most treasured person would enjoy. Deep respect is evident in displays of interpersonal and public behaviour, as well as by demonstrating an intolerance for criticism, complaining, gossiping, or maliciousness. As primary role models, leaders are obligated not just to operate personally from a place of deep respect but also to remind others of the need to treat everyone with respect at all times. This obligation is especially important when differences or conflicts break out. Deep respect does not mean that everyone must always live in harmony and agreement, but it does mean that, when conflicts arise, they will be handled in ways that protect the dignity of all parties.

In our work with high-capacity schools (Mitchell and Sackney 2009), we found that leaders who operated from the principle of deep respect built affective conditions of trust, hope, support, and encouragement, and it was on this foundation that people felt free to take risks, to make mistakes, to learn, and to grow. With mistakes and failure viewed as necessary aspects of learning, a culture of experimentation emerged that raised the level of innovation and risk taking, and also raised the level of professional autonomy. This result underscores the essential place of affective conditions in the learning ecology and the essential role of the leaders in the construction of strong relationships.

Cultural Conditions

We contend, as has Schein (1992), that group formation is really a process of culture formation because the cultural pattern of meaning, beliefs, and values arises from the shared experiences of the group. Cultural conditions, or "what keeps the herd moving in roughly a western direction," constitute the expectations and arrangements within which shared meanings, efforts, and commitments develop, and work by Rosenholtz (1989), Hargreaves (1994), and Stoll and Fink (1996) confirms that dysfunctional cultures can limit school improvement. It is, according to Bryk and Schneider (2003), up to the school leaders to establish cultural conditions that will support improvements in teaching and learning.

With meaning serving as the foundation for educational activity, Bryk and Schneider (2003) argue, members of a school community must come to some degree of consensus about the obligations and expectations held by and for one another. Attention, therefore, needs to be paid to the structure, content, and character of educators' talk. Senge (1990) distinguishes between two complementary ways of structuring collegial discourse: "In a *discussion*, different views are presented and defended, and… this may provide a useful analysis of the whole situation. In *dialogue*, different views are presented as a means toward discovering a

new view" (p. 247, italics added). Through dialogue, Senge contends, individuals hold their own point gently and listen to others' points so as to come more fully into the web of meanings, aspirations, aims, values, and beliefs that are present in the group. Awareness of this intentional web prepares people to step beyond their own comfortable group of friends and to build informed relationships with a wider set of colleagues. In this regard, Lambert (1998) notes, "As individuals interact with one another, they tend to listen across boundaries—boundaries erected by disciplines, grade levels, expertise, authority, position, race, and gender" (p. 79). Dialogue asks individuals not just to listen and reframe their own positions and practices, but to put their own meanings aside so that they can see into the meanings of their colleagues. It asks people to reflect on their practices, in the light of these new meanings, and to return these reflections to the conversation for consideration by colleagues.

This kind of discourse invites educators to move out of the veneer of harmony in order to hammer out understandings, obligations, and expectations that are grounded in trust, forged in diversity, and imbued with power. In most schools, congeniality keeps the lid on interpersonal conflict, but diverse educational beliefs and agendas will always exist when different people share work spaces and professional obligations. Leaders have the task of seeing that a culture of congeniality does not paper over the divisions and fault lines within the group. Differences need to be uncovered and understood so that staff can decipher the totality of patterns, connections, beliefs, values, and commitments that influence educational lives and then arrive at a collective sense of what matters to them, what kind of school they want, and what they want for the students. Leaders help educators to move gracefully through difficult negotiations by bringing them back to one primary commitment: "that they are in the school to build the best possible learning environment for the children in their care, to foster the children's growth and learning, and to help the children feel happy and successful" (Mitchell and Sackney 2009, pp. 101–102). With comments such as, "Let's talk about what we want for the children and what this is doing to them," leaders remind people of the goal, reaffirm their purpose, and move the discourse toward educational matters.

With shared meanings and a common commitment in place, the stage is set for the emergence of a collaborative work culture, which is a characteristic of learning communities (Hargreaves 2003; Huffman and Hipp 2003). Friend and Cook (2000) define collaboration as "working together in a supportive and mutually beneficial relationship" (p. 5); we have defined it as "authentic professional interactions that arise from genuine interests or purposes held in common and that lead to a sense and a practice of interdependence among participants" (Mitchell and Sackney 2009, p. 91). In this type of culture, educators come together to discuss issues, sort out challenges, plan new learning opportunities, and discuss new instructional ideas. In high-capacity schools (Mitchell and Sackney 2009), we found teams forming not because of institutional expectations that they should exist but because teachers saw relevant connections between the joint work and their own teaching assignments. One of the unanticipated benefits of teamwork was that it occasionally

brought teachers with limited collaborative experience into meaningful conversation with their colleagues, and the exposure to novel ideas extended their professional capacity. The culture thus enabled the development of "socially distributed knowledge, whereby individual knowledge bases become part of the collective discourse and expand the professional capacity of the entire team" (Mitchell and Sackney 2000, p. 60).

Despite the benefits of collaboration, it can be compromised by insufficient time, weak teacher efficacy, fragmented vision, competitive teams, and poor conflict management (Hargreaves 1994), as well as by the physical structure of schools (Friend and Cook 2000). Leaders can offset such issues by modelling effective collaborative practices, by facilitating open and responsive communication patterns that enable information and ideas to flow freely, and by opening spaces for teachers to talk to one another about matters of consequence to them. Much of the criticism of collaboration can be traced to the managed character of collaborative activity, which is often forced, directed, and controlled by goals and objectives that have been written elsewhere in the system and imposed on the school. When collaboration unfolds from an ecological perspective, it is a natural part of teachers' work lives. It grows from their desire to become better at teaching and learning, and it develops as teachers talk to one another throughout the day. It is the task of the leader to hold the managed system at bay long enough for collaboration to emerge naturally and become embedded in the school culture.

The ecological character of cultural conditions can be seen in the mutual influences of collaborative work, collective commitments, and shared meanings. Shared understandings bring educators into practice-based exchanges, during which they recast and refine their work to arrive at a shared sense of meaning and purpose. The shared understandings of how their work should unfold and how they should relate to one another evolve into recognizable professional bonds and collegial expectations that Wenger (1998) calls a *community of practice*. However, Gherardi (2006) argues that a community of practice can be conservative in character if the focus is placed on past understandings. This concern is alleviated when the collegial community is understood in ecological terms. Capra (2002) argues that living systems (such as communities of practice) are characterized by creativity, adaptability, diversity, and novelty but that "a living network … chooses both which disturbances to notice and how to respond" (p. 111). In other words, the messages that get through to educators are those that have meaning, and novelty emerges when the messages are compelling enough to elicit a response.

From this perspective, learning and change are anchored in, guided by, and channelled through the values and purposes of the community. Capra (2002) contends that "human beings, like all living systems, cannot be directed but can only be disturbed" (p. 154). His argument challenges leaders not to direct the innovations and improvements in a school but to help educators build a culture of experimentation around the compelling disturbances in their world of work. A culture of professional autonomy, risk taking, and freedom to experiment enables teachers to respond, to learn, and to grow in ways that are personally meaningful and that support the learning and growth of the students.

Improving the educational experiences of students serves as a prime motivator for professional sharing, and it is through professional sharing that school cultures are built. Leaders can help to shape the cultural conditions by focusing the discourse on the meanings and commitments that set challenging and realistic expectations for student learning and that yield an inviting and exciting school environment. In fact, it may be one of the biggest roles that leaders can play in a school – the development of cultures that help the people in them to learn and grow as they confront the challenges, successes, and mysteries of teaching and learning.

Structural Conditions

In living systems, Capra (2002) notes, structure emerges in response to the interactions between an organism and its environment, and structure thereafter shapes the interactions. This relationship "implies that the behaviour of the living organism is dictated by its structure" (p. 36). Capra's insight places great significance on the structural arrangements within which the cognitive, affective, and cultural conditions in schools unfold and operate. To shape behaviours that will support a strong learning ecology, structures should invest in professional knowledge, bring people into contact with one another, accommodate collegial decision making, and enable coherence and congruency to develop.

When building structural conditions, leaders should keep in mind Capra's (2002) distinction between *designed* and *emergent* structures. Designed structures are the formal aspects inscribed in institutional policies, procedures, and documents, whereas emergent structures grow naturally within informal networks and communities of practice. Both types are essential: "Designed structures provide stability. Emergent structures, on the other hand, provide novelty, creativity, and flexibility" (p. 121). Capra argues that skilful leaders understand the relationship between the two, build systems with an optimal balance of design and emergence, and navigate the tensions "between the creativity of emergence and the stability of design" (p. 121).

Connecting emergence and design is an important feature of structures that handle professional knowledge and learning. Gozdz (1995) calls this the *learning architecture*, which he defines as "the systems and structures that sustain memory and learning in the organization over time" (p. 61). With the term *knowledge ecology*, Petrides and Guiney (2002) shift attention away from structures and toward "humans in their strategic use of information, information politics and the culture and behavior of individuals in an organization" (p. 1703). Leaders can integrate these two approaches with the elements of design and emergence. The architecture consists in the design features of communication, professional learning, and knowledge flow; emergence comes from the creative mechanisms, strategies, and interactions with which people exchange ideas, draw meaning from information, create new knowledge, test practices, and embed innovations. Blending these two aspects yields structural conditions that open spaces for collaborative learning, accommodate work-embedded learning, facilitate connections with internal and external networks, engage individual and collective sense-making, move ideas around the

school, and change in response to new questions or meanings. This approach to building structures for professional learning and knowledge is active, interpersonal, purpose-driven, and context-bound.

The foregoing description implies a need to attend to the lines of communication in a school. This structural condition gains greater significance with Capra's (2002) positioning of communication as the central process in collective sense-making:

> Each communication creates thoughts and meanings, which give rise to further communications.... As communications recur in multiple feedback loops, they produce a shared system of beliefs, explanations, and values—a common context of meaning—that is continually sustained by further communication. (p. 83)

The connection between communication and meaning compels leaders to build channels of ubiquitous communication, where information flows freely in all directions from and to all individuals, where places exist for everyone to write or share information, and where everyone is encouraged to contribute to ongoing discourse. These communication structures not only move information around, but they also enable educators to participate collectively in Choo's (1998) three processes of knowledge work: (1) making sense of new information; (2) converting, building on, and linking information to create knowledge; and (3) selecting knowledge to guide decisions and actions.

Collective sense-making implies the presence of structures that bring people together. One such structure is collaborative teams, and many different configurations and purposes of teams are possible. The ways in which they move into school structures are limited only by the imagination of the staff. In our work in high-capacity schools (Mitchell and Sackney 2009), we found teachers and leaders to be creative in finding time for professional discourse and collaborative work. They met early in the morning, at noon, after school, in the evening, and on weekends; staff meetings were structured as joint work and professional discourse times; and school leaders assumed instructional duties to secure time for teachers to meet. Interestingly, we found educators in high-capacity schools to prefer structures that brought them into contact with a broad set of colleagues. They had found that, as they clustered in groups around specific goals or grade levels, they were limited in their ability to integrate and extend their work. Their experience suggests that tightly structuring collaborative teams around specific teaching assignments has the potential to balkanize groups (Hargreaves 1994) and to fragment knowledge. It also implies that collaborative structures should encourage wide conversations about professional knowledge and effective practice, facilitate a cross-pollination of educational ideas, and engage all educators in sustained discourse and learning.

Networks are another structural element that brings people together, but the ecological perspective has brought us to a deeper appreciation of networks as the key organizing feature of living systems. As Capra (2002) explains, "At all levels of life… the components and processes of living systems are interlinked in network fashion" (p. 81). He argues that the network pattern in social systems parallels that found in biological systems: "In the Information Age, networking has emerged as a critical form of organization in all sections of society. Dominant social functions are increasingly organized around networks, and participation in these networks is a

critical source of power" (p. 149). He positions networks as the structures that generate thought, meaning, and identity and argues that a process of self-making and meaning-making unfolds as structures are formed and transformed to accommodate purposes and to facilitate functions. From this perspective, network construction is meaningful: networks emerge to respond to compelling disturbances in ways that enhance life and preserve the integrity of purpose. The question of meaning, therefore, is central to the question of network design in schools, and the most successful networks will be ones that address matters of consequence to the teachers.

The role of leaders in building networks, coupled with the role of networks in meaning-making, highlights the importance of structures that frame the power relationships in the educational hierarchy. In a learning ecology, structural conditions should support a broad base of leadership functions and include a large cadre of leaders. Although these arrangements would disperse power and leadership throughout the school, we do not position them in terms of distributed leadership. Instead, we argue for designs that allow leadership to emerge naturally as opportunities and issues arise in a school. We make this shift in light of Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) warning that "not all distributed leadership is sustainable leadership. It depends on how the leadership is distributed and for what purpose" (p. 111). Their words suggest that the term *distributed leadership* constructs leadership as a commodity or a resource that can be distributed by someone to another, which encumbers it with hierarchical assumptions and positional impediments. In a learning ecology, leadership should not be hierarchical or positional; it should be natural, self-regenerating, purposeful, often spontaneous, and always directed toward issues of teaching and learning. A term that captures its character is *emergent leadership*. This conception implies power relationships and leadership structures that are as much constructed by teachers and students as by administrators and other formal leaders. It also implies that the structures will change as different matters arise and different people step up to the leadership tasks.

With many people taking on leadership, structures are needed to bring about coherence and congruency. Capra (2002) and Wheatley (2006) view constant feedback as the mechanism that puts people in touch with the effects of their activity and aligns practices with enduring purposes. Feedback is available from a wide array of school and student data, but Earl and Katz (2006) have found that most teachers do not know how to examine the data they collect, transform the data into meaningful information, or use the knowledge to inform decision making. Consequently, structures should build data literacy by bringing educators into informed, analytic conversations about and critical reflections on data. Without data, there is a danger of relying on past practices that are separated from outcomes and unsupported by evidence, whereas data provide an empirical foundation for decision making and pedagogic shifts. With data, educators can link student outcomes to educational practice, interrogate the efficacy of current practice, seek out ways to improve teaching and learning, clarify what they hope to accomplish for students, and come to an agreement about how to move professional practice forward appropriately. (Incidentally, this is a case where emergent leadership becomes relevant: Data-literate educators will be the most appropriate leaders within the data structures.)

In a learning ecology, building structural conditions is an ongoing creative response to questions about the kind of systems that will support and enhance true, authentic human learning. If the structures fail to meet that central purpose, they are rendered inauthentic and meaningless and are subject to review and reconstruction. People are bound to existing behavioural patterns to the extent that they are bound to the existing structure, and leaders need to be willing to let go of structures that no longer serve current realities, even if they have a personal investment in and attachment to the structures. They also need to promote tolerance for flexible design in the school so that staff and students can navigate the ambiguity associated with structures that come into existence for a brief time to accommodate a specific activity and then fade out of existence. The purposeful and cyclical character of this process enables educators to build a school that has a dynamic balance between stability and creativity, supports teaching and learning, responds to current conditions, and is open to ongoing self-regeneration. It is, to use Capra's (2002) words, "a continual bringing forth of a world through the process of living" (p. 36).

Leading With/In Learning Ecologies

Although we have described the four domains separately, our choice does not imply "boundaries of separation but boundaries of identity" (Capra 2002, p. 231). Each domain serves a unique purpose but is intimately connected to, influenced by, and influences all other domains, and together they constitute the deep (invisible) and surface (visible) structures in schools. Senge (1990) defines the deep structures as the tacit beliefs, values, and assumptions that underpin the lived experiences of the people, and the surface structures as the observable rules, policies, procedures, and processes that define and contain organizational activity. The deep and surface structures exert a pressure that scripts lives and inscribes practices in specific ways. In schools, the question for leaders to ask is the extent to which the pressures from the deep and surface structures allow people to grow in ways that are life-enhancing and learning-rich rather than life-diminishing and learning-impoverished.

Constructing the four domains from an ecological perspective requires leaders to pay attention to "the processes and patterns of organization of living systems – on the 'hidden connections between phenomena'" (Capra 2002, p. xvii). It challenges them to think not about the distinct domains but about holistic patterns of activity and mutual influences within the school. It asks them to understand that learning and knowledge sit within and grow from a matrix of information, ideas, practices, activities, interpretations, aspirations, histories, and relationships. From all this richness, individuals notice those elements that are compelling to them and they build knowledge by coming to a personal sense of the matter. Individual learning, in other words, is not a straight line from idea to knowledge, nor is it solely an individually driven pursuit. Instead, it is a deeply mediated, textured, nuanced, and interconnected process by which people come to a sense of meaning with others in their community.

This view of learning as an inherent and ongoing property of life changes the character of the relationships between leaders and others. It calls attention to the deep and lasting effects all people have on all other folks in their community, even if they are unaware of or do not acknowledge their impacts. The connections among cognition, affect, culture, and structure indicate that the character of the relationships shapes the way people teach and/or learn. Leaders, therefore, have the task of discovering the meanings and purposes that underlie specific actions so that they can move beyond judgements about unacceptable or confusing actions and find the order that comes when looking at the actions through a different lens, a different purpose, a different set of assumptions, or a different person's meaning.

The ecological perspective challenges leaders to build conditions that free people to learn and grow in their own ways and times. Capra (2002) points out that "life constantly reaches out into novelty" (p. 14) but that individuals always "maintain the freedom to decide what to notice and what will disturb them" (p. 36). People are living human beings with goals, hopes, dreams, and intentions, and it is disrespectful to assume that anyone can motivate another to learn or to change. Leaders can certainly disturb others, but people's motivation and responses will be guided by the meanings and purposes in their lives. Their learning and their growth will be unpredictable, uncontrollable, and unmanageable, but deeply meaningful, purposeful, engaging, exciting, and energizing, and the conditions in the school need to honour and protect this reality.

The ecological perspective signifies that educational systems are not naturally occurring phenomena but are constructed by human beings and, as human constructions, they reflect the kind of education that people in specific places and times believe to be natural or important. This concept is one of the most promising notions to emerge from an ecological perspective: if leaders recognize the existing educational system as a personally and collectively constructed reality, they are then free to imagine other realities and, once imagined, the new image can nudge them toward different constructions that have greater meaning and that make more sense for current conditions. It is important to emphasize, however, that no template or set of best practices can be offered for building a strong learning ecology. As Capra (2002) notes,

> Emergent solutions are created within the context of a particular organizational culture and generally cannot be transferred to another organization with a different culture … What [organizational leaders] tend to do is replicate a new structure that has been successful without transferring the tacit knowledge and context of meaning from which the new structure emerged. (p. 119)

Capra's words challenge leaders to begin the building process by honouring the people, contexts, and realities that exist in the school. This is the approach that holds the greatest promise for building conditions in schools so that the excitement and joy of learning becomes the norm rather than the exception for all children and adults in the schools, so that children and adults are respected for who they are and what they can do, and so that learning becomes a way of life rather than an activity or an initiative.

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Chapter 54
Leaders Who Build and Sustain Passion for Learning: Capacity Building in Practice

Qing Gu

Introduction

> Good leaders change organisations; great leaders change people. People are at the heart of any organisation, particularly a school, and it is only through changing people – nurturing and challenging them, helping them grow and develop, creating a culture in which they all learn – that an organisation can flourish. (Hoerr 2005: 7)

The purpose of this chapter is to show how one 'great' school principal progressively and continuously created conditions for the learning and development of her staff and through this, built and enhanced the capacity at individual, collective and community levels for successful and sustained school improvement. The chapter will begin with an account of the phases of development in this female principal's primary school in China. It will explore how, over a 4-year period, the principal built stable and successful learning and achievement environments in this newly founded school and transformed it into one of the key (i.e. successful) primary schools in a well-established district in Beijing, China. Drawing upon the literature on successful leadership and the current debate about the societal and cultural influence over educational leadership and administration (Walker and Dimmock 2002), the chapter will endeavour to provide additional evidence on leadership practices in *successful* Chinese schools and demonstrate how clear sets of values, qualities and skills which are shown to have contributed to the success of this 49 year old Chinese principal, also apply to the successful work of many other 'great' principals internationally.

Although there is an increasing empirical literature on successful leadership and the need to take cultures and contexts into account, much of the writing which draws on comparative literature on cultural influences (e.g. Hofstede 1980), is now quite dated because it does not account for globalisation influences. This is especially the

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case where, as in China, there is an exponential growth in the knowledge economy. There is, therefore, a need to revisit and reexamine existing assumptions and assertions about the extent to which culture specific differences continue to exist in school leadership, especially those of successful principals in urban settings.

The Context of the School

Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School is located in Zhongguancun, the so-called 'Silicon Valley' of Haidian District in Beijing. The history of Haidian District can be traced back to the eighth century. Now it hosts a number of the most prestigious universities in China and is renowned as the leading high-tech and scientific research hub in Beijing and China.

In order to meet the continued development and expansion of the 'Silicon Valley', Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School was founded by the Ministry of Education in September 2003. Its catchment areas are newly developed residential communities. Household income is above the national average and the majority of parents have further education and/or professional backgrounds.

In March 2005 when Keqin joined this new school, there were only 280 pupils and 22 teachers, smaller than average in Beijing. The quality of teaching and learning and the scale of school improvement had not at that time met the demands and expectations of the parents. In their eyes, this new school should have grown into a feature of the new community and become the fourth key school in the Village. The pressures from parents, together with the school's unsatisfactory quality of provision of teaching and learning, had led to an unhealthy relationship between the school and its local community which was characterised by constant tensions and conflicts.

By March 2010, 5 years after the principal had been appointed, the school had more than 1,200 pupils and 65 teachers. Compared with other long-standing successful schools in Haidian District, most of which have a history of over 40 years and 3,000–5,000 pupils on the school roll, Zhongguancun Primary School is still a smaller than average school. Nonetheless, it has now become known as an emerging key (i.e. successful) primary school in the district – a school which enjoys improved school conditions, enhanced overall effectiveness, higher quality of student learning and better academic outcomes compared with other ordinary and/or weak schools in the same area. Additionally, it has built a team of young, energetic, highly committed and highly qualified teachers, and has established active, strong and trusting relationships with its local community.

A key characteristic of the school is its motto which is clearly displayed at the entrance of the school building: 'Everyone is of immense value to the school! Everyone plays a role in the development of the school! Everyone can make a difference!' During the last 5 years, efforts have been made by the principal to enhance progressively communication, inclusivity and participation in decision-making in the school, and through these, to ensure that these values are shared in the hearts and minds of teachers, pupils and parents, and subsequently, shape and deepen an

open, supportive and collaborative school culture of learning and achievement. There is now a shared belief among teachers within the school that this new culture charges them with courage and passion for learning and development, promotes a sense of belonging and ownership of their work, encourages personalised and creative learning among pupils, and also sustains continued transformation of the school. The key architect of these changes has been the principal.

The Principal

Keqin describes her leadership practices as having been driven by a strong sense of moral purpose and vocation (or calling). Having been in teaching for 29 years, she has always believed that her role is to 'cherish the children' and make a difference to their learning, growth and achievement. Such a belief is supported by a sense of hopefulness and optimism. For Keqin, 'The joy and happiness of being a teacher grows out of a sincere and generous love for the children and professional pride in their achievement.' Over the course of her teaching career, Keqin has won numerous teaching awards at provincial and national levels and has been one of the pioneers promoting, leading and implementing student-centred teaching and learning reforms in China. She was awarded 'special-grade teacher' status in 1994 (i.e. 'super teacher', a national award in recognition of some primary and secondary school teachers' excellence in teaching), and has been described as 'special' and as an outstanding teacher with 'elegance, wisdom, affinity and self-confident temperament' who is 'absolutely determined to pursue the happiness of being a teacher' (China Education 2008). This is her third principalship. She had previously led two well-established, key schools in her home province, Henan, an inland traditional agricultural province which has recently seen rapid growth and expansion of its economy and industry. However, for Keqin, the differences in the three schools' development contexts, rather than their substantial geographical and contextual differences, posed the greatest challenge for her leadership practices.

> It is relatively easier to take over and lead a mature school than creating a new outstanding school. When leading the two mature schools in Henan, a lot of my efforts and energy were put to guiding and directing the continuing professional development of the staff. Although the challenge to sustain success could also be immense, it was of great help to be able to build new developments on the well-established, highly effective school structures, systems and culture. However, to lead a new school, I have to focus on not only designing a new organisational structure and system, but also creating a team of committed, professional teachers who love teaching and love the children.

In Keqin's mind, then, she was not endeavouring to build a good school, but an outstanding school. To achieve this required the building of systems appropriate to growth needs, standard raising and the nurturing relationships for care and achievement.

In Beijing, there are many well-known, successful schools. Since Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School commenced, many people have been watching its growth and

judging the quality of its performance. In order to achieve the 'great-leap-forward development' of the school, one cannot afford to only focus on setting up management structures, rules and regulations, and systems. All these are important but not sufficient. They might enable one to build a satisfactory school, but not an outstanding school. Thus, the leader has to do a lot of creative things at the same time.

Layering the Foundation for Sustained Learning

Much of the literature on building the capacity for successful school improvement focuses on 'the interplay between personal abilities, interpersonal relationships, and organisational structures' (Mitchell and Sackney 2000: 11). Particular attention has been paid to developing the skills, knowledge and sense of belonging of the staff. In reflecting on her 5-year principalship at Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School, Keqin claims that her success as a school principal has relied on three sets of essential professional and personal qualities and skills which give her the confidence and strength to lead:

1. A clear sense of direction, a long-term vision allied with a focussed mind and a calm temperament
2. An ability to inspire teachers' potential and grow their capacity for learning and development allied with a patient temperament
3. Forward thinking allied with an empathetic mind, expanding horizons, involving others

A Clear Sense of Direction, a Long-Term Vision Allied with a Focussed Mind and a Calm Temperament

As the principal, Keqin recognises that almost everything she does in the school will have some impact on the work and lives of the staff and/or the pupils. It is thus important to her that she models a calm and positive attitude and remains focussed on inspiring teachers and pupils to reach their learning potential. She stresses that we are living in a fast changing society which presents schools with multiple challenges, potential conflicts, temptations of fame and fortune and innumerable opportunities. She suggests that in such a complex and unstable societal environment, it has become far too easy for principals to be sidetracked by the glory of short-term achievements and quick-fix solutions. Over the last 5 years, she has learned to nourish and stand up for her values and beliefs, her vision and the deep calling of education in pursuit of long term, sustainable change and achievement of the pupils and the school. Most importantly, she has learned to communicate her values and beliefs to the people she leads and weave them into the fabric of the school's daily activities.

What she has also learned over time is the importance of actively nurturing the core purposes of education in her own teaching and leadership practices. She has found that when teachers and school leaders are busy meeting externally imposed targets and raising standards, too often they have little time to reflect on what education really means behind the busyness of their school life. However, Keqin believes that a good school is a place in which effective teaching and learning occur in a caring and calm manner. This is because 'good teachers' are passionate teachers who make efforts to get to know their pupils and develop a genuine, deep understanding of their feelings, needs and concerns. 'Good teaching' touches the pupils' hearts and enriches their minds and, in her view, when good teaching happens, deep learning occurs.

The same core purposes underpin what successful leaders do. Her passion for education is driven by 'a simple belief', that is, 'education is all about adults doing something good for the learning and growth of the children.' For Keqin, remembering the names of many of her pupils is important because she cares. Like many other caring leaders and teachers, she listens attentively and responds as positively as possible to the learning needs and concerns of her pupils (Noddings 2005). She is proud to see that at her school, such core purposes are shared and treasured by the teachers and define the characteristics of the school culture. In Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School, fostering a happy and calm learning environment in which pupils are encouraged to grow into intelligent, creative and self-confident citizens of tomorrow's society is at the centre of what the adults do. Most important is that in doing so, the principal and the teachers deepen their sense of moral purpose and their own learning and professionalism. Keqin persists in her belief that if the meaning of education is perceived from this perspective, then the secrets of building successful schools should be much easier to unravel.

An Ability to Inspire Teachers' Potential and Grow Their Capacity for Learning and Development Allied with a Patient Temperament

As the principal, Keqin defines her role as a facilitator and an inspirer. She sees it as her duty and responsibility to be able to communicate her aspirations and ideals with those of her teachers, identify their strengths and weaknesses, inspire their motivation and commitment to learn and their desire to reach their full potential, and through these, encourage them to develop into competent, confident and capable professionals. Such a leadership quality is also reported in a national study on the impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes in England (Day et al. 2009, 2010), which found that effective English primary and secondary principals demonstrated the abilities to 'diagnose, acknowledge, understand and attend to a range of human development limitations and potentials' which enabled them to 'engage with, challenge and support others in the sustained implementation of change processes' (Day et al. 2009: 184).

In Keqin's eyes, every individual teacher is important to the school because they have their unique strengths and thus are of immense value to the school's improvement. She is proud of the team that she has built over time. She is confident that all teachers in her school love their pupils, share a strong sense of responsibility to the school and the parents, and, also, are themselves ambitious professionals who have a strong sense of direction about their own learning and development.

As the principal of a school with a few thousand pupils and over 60 teachers, Keqin knows well that a single, principal centred hands-on approach alone will not enable her to build a great team and transform a successful school. Thus, she has invested a substantial amount of time and energy to create and develop a learning environment which promotes creativity and collegiality amongst the teachers. Moreover, her efforts to develop, broaden and deepen such a collective culture of learning never seem to stop. She continues to expand the school's professional networks and looks to the wider academic community for additional intellectual input (see Phase 3 strategies later in the chapter). In short, inspiring learning and building a sense of collaboration and collegiality feature as key characteristics of her leadership vision and practices.

Forward Thinking Allied with an Empathetic Mind, Expanding Horizons, Involving Others

Successful principals keep their fingers on the pulse of the most cutting-edge educational innovations and practices and strategically inject them into the process of school improvement. Keqin is no exception.

Over the course of her teaching and leadership career, she has established a wide range of national and international professional networks. This, together with her long-standing involvement in regional and national curriculum reforms, has enabled her to keep abreast of new thinking and development in educational policies. By engaging external expertise in staff training and development and expanding links with partner schools locally, nationally and internationally, Keqin has provided teachers with a variety of opportunities to access new ideas, new policies and innovative practices in teaching and learning. This is because she understands that schools' successful development must be aligned with current policy and research. She also understands the importance of strategically designing and planning the foci of these learning opportunities so that they are fit for purpose and can best serve the differentiated needs of the school in different phases of its development.

These professional learning opportunities have opened the minds of many teachers in her school to critical and creative ways of thinking. More important, they see their principal as a close partner, guide and supporter in their journey of professional learning and development. She is not only a source of sustained intellectual support but also an emotional support to which teachers can turn when they are endeavouring to improve their classroom practices. As the principal, Keqin understands how her empathy with the teachers can make a real difference in building

and reinforcing a learning-focussed and happy school culture in which a sense of belonging will be nurtured, a sense of mission and purpose widely shared and a sense of collective efficacy, commitment and resilience enhanced.

Successful leaders recruit, develop and retain outstanding teachers. In Keqin's mind, this is an open secret of a successful school. She is a firm believer in teamwork. Shaping a supportive, open and collaborative learning culture in the school over time, and through this, building a team of outstanding, forward-looking teachers have been at the heart of her work within and across three phases of school development.

Three Phases of Development

In the 5 years of this principals' leadership, Zhongguancun No.4 Primary School has experienced three phases of development. Whilst each phase had its own distinct priorities for change and school improvement, no phase was entirely self-contained or isolated from another. Like many effective primary and secondary principals in England who implement phase-differentiated, layered leadership strategies within and across their schools' development phases (Day 2007; Day et al. 2009, 2010), this Chinese principal also used combinations and accumulations of strategies in different phases in ways which were both appropriate and timely. Whilst some strategies were diagnosed as being fit for purpose in earlier phases, others were being 'seeded' so that when they were implemented in later phases, they could build upon effects of earlier strategies and, also, broaden and deepen their effects over time (Day et al. 2009: 129).

Her work over these phases shows how the values, strategies and actions of this successful principal were very similar to those successful principals in many other countries that have different cultural and educationally diverse histories. All possess, implement and develop similar core qualities, strategies and skills in response to their context sensitive judgments of contextual histories, diagnosis of professional, organisational, policy and pupil needs and in relation to a set of clear, strongly and persistently expressed and enacted values. Like others, she establishes systems and cultures over time and, like others, she 'layers' the strategies necessary for building and sustaining capacities for increasing the intellectual and affective commitments of staff to high aspirations of a collective vision. She has now transformed her school into one which encourages a collective sense of responsibility, appreciates and respects the wisdom and contribution of individual teachers and pupils, and nurtures individual and collective leadership for sustained learning and development.

The chapter now explores further the meaning of transformation in practice in this school in order to understand the characteristics, values, qualities and skills which this principal possessed and which enabled her to achieve success by working with and through people in developing cultures of trust and distributed leadership rather than exercising power over them and maintaining what others have (incorrectly) assumed to be a traditional 'power distance' relationship.

Development Phase One (2005–2006): Identifying the Gaps in Teaching Practices and Building Relationships

When Keqin was appointed, Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School was 2 years old, with less than 300 pupils and 22 teachers. It was a school which had failed to meet expectations of the parents or establish good relationships with its local communities. Like many successful principals in other countries (e.g. Leithwood et al. 2006a; Day 2007; Day and Leithwood 2007; Fullan 2008), Keqin understood the urgency of developing positive relationships within and outside the school community and building a strong team of talented and committed teachers. Her first three steps were thus:

1. Promoting positive relationships amongst teachers

Promoting positive relationships amongst teachers had been central to her work since her appointment at Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School. In the face of an ineffective organisational structure and a small number of teachers, Keqin knew that it was important to engage all her staff in the school's development, ensuring that everyone was pulling their weight towards a shared direction. Creating an open, warm and friendly work environment was the first step towards building a healthy climate for collaborative learning, development and innovation in the school. She did this by getting to know them and listening to their professional and personal needs and concerns. This enabled her to understand their current way of life. Communication with her staff was conducted in an open and friendly manner. Unlike some other principals, she did not have a fixed, formal venue to meet her staff. Meetings could take place anywhere on the school site, such as the classroom, the playground, the staffroom and the offices.

She also had an eye for detail because she understood that reading the minutiae of everyday school life would help her understand its deep, underlying core values and beliefs. Such abilities to observe, watch, sense, listen, analyse and interpret people and events are key to successful leadership (Deal and Peterson 2009). It was important that she was able to look beneath the surface in order to capture detailed changes, frustrations, struggles as well as success and achievements that her teachers were experiencing. She was then able to ensure that her feedback was communicated to teachers in an immediate and appropriate manner, either in the form of empathetic support, critique or celebration of success.

Thus, for teachers, their principal was a companion who was directly engaged in the same processes of learning, change and development; and, just as importantly, an intellectual and emotional resource. In order to reduce teachers' resentment and fear of change and to encourage an open and reflective dialogue amongst them, Keqin introduced weekly round-table teaching forums. She sat with teachers listening to their struggles and problems in the classroom, discussing values and visions of the school, sharing good practices and new ideas, and collectively exploring ways of transforming the practices of teaching and learning.

> Some teachers were deeply concerned about changing the traditional methods of teaching and learning. They were worried that their class might be out of control. Such worries were

perfectly understandable, but they should not be the reason which stops us from trying to change and improve so that we can provide our children with the best education possible. In the first year, I spent a lot of time observing classes and modelling ways of initiating class discussions and interactions. Our regular round-table teaching forums were proven to be an effective way of getting teachers together, sharing the joy and enthusiasm of positive changes and learning to solve problems in a trusting, collaborative, transparent and supportive manner.

The sustained support and recognition from the principal fuelled teachers with positive energy and a desire to continue to find ways of improving their own practices, the learning of their pupils, and the performance of their school.

In order to further reinforce teachers' desire to learn and foster their faith and sense of ownership in the school, Keqin developed the motto 'Everyone is of immense value to the school!' Through modelling an open, friendly and supportive work manner, she began to encourage more sustained dialogue amongst teachers and through this, nurture a warm, harmonious and productive way of working.

2. Identifying the gaps: improving teaching and learning in classrooms

At the heart of her leadership philosophy is the view that 'The school's sustained development relies upon the quality of its teachers'. Improving the quality of provision of teaching and learning has, therefore, always been the priority of Keqin's leadership.

The task of developing teachers was particularly urgent when she joined Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School, for there was at that time a profound disconnection between the values and practices of the teachers and the dynamic nature of the fast changing community beyond the school gate. Although children in today's Chinese society tend to have stronger personalities and individuality, conformity rather than originality continues to be encouraged. In order to raise the standards of work in the classroom and to change attitudes to learning, Keqin worked with staff in their classrooms to help them understand that, although their spoon-fed, teacher-centred approach might provide them with a sense of control and security, it failed to meet the learning and development needs of children in the twenty-first century. She ensured that teachers observed each other's lessons and, through feedback, invited them to reflect *on* and *about* their practices in individual lessons, identify the causes of their struggles, discuss ways of getting to know their pupils and to encourage them to explore ways of engaging pupils in class discussion and interaction.

Through these processes of change, Keqin refined teachers' understanding of their own practices and, in a subtle and strategic way, aligned their ways of thinking and reflection with the direction of the school's development. It was by these means that student-centred pedagogy began to be practised in her school.

3. Gaining community recognition and acceptance

Keqin believes that connecting schools to their wider community is essential for the healthy development of any good schools:

Schools are part of the wider community. Thus, if you want to build a good school, one of the first priorities has to be gaining recognition and support from the parents and the wider

community. And this applies to all schools in all communities. However, as to how connect to the community, different schools may face different issues and explore different strategies depending upon the characteristics of the community.

Keqin invested considerable time building communication channels with parents and the local community. She organised a series of forums in the school and invited members of staff from local authorities, museums and libraries, higher education institutions and other related local organisations to visit the school, so that they could meet teachers and pupils, find out more about the core values and beliefs of this new school, how the school might contribute to the development of the community, and also, the ways that the community could help to promote the school's improvement.

The most effective way of connecting with the local community had been through establishing dialogue and mutual trust with the parents. Parents' evenings were the most common form of contact. Additionally, they were encouraged to assist and participate in school activities, so that they could see and feel the challenges and the complexity of teachers' work and lives, be more patient with teachers and also, develop a better understanding of the values, beliefs and ethos that this new school was endeavouring to promote and embed in its school life. These leadership values are, again, in line with one of the most consistent findings in research on effective schools, which points to positive associations between creating productive relations with families and communities and school improvement (Goldring and Rallis 1993; Waters et al. 2003; Leithwood et al. 2006b; Deal and Peterson 2009).

In contrast to the previous principal, Keqin felt that the professional backgrounds of the parents had made it easier for her to connect her educational ideals and values with theirs and thus made a significant difference to parent–school relationships. Most parents valued education and had high expectations of the quality of provision of teaching and learning. A mutual interest in the provision of whole-child, quality education and shared expectations between this new school and the parents bonded them together. As Deal and Peterson observe, 'Educators and community relationships thrive in a jointly controlled, emotionally satisfying, spiritually uplifting educational community' (2009: 183). By bringing parents into the school and deeply involving them in the school life, Keqin was able to persuade parents to be more understanding, patient and supportive, rather than losing faith, when they felt that particular teachers had not quite managed to effectively realise the school's motto and values in their classrooms. As a result of these open and genuine communications and positive interactions, trusting connections with parents and the local community began to take root.

Development Phase Two (2006–2007): Deepening and Broadening Learning: Building Capacity

Phase 1 was primarily about locating values and purposes and building relationships, which served as a necessary foundation for sustained change and improvement in

the next phase. Since 2006, Zhonggunachun No. 4 Primary School had moved ahead to focus upon deepening and broadening the enactment of its values and purposes. To achieve this, learning remained the priority of the principal's leadership activity. Within this, however, she inaugurated a number of capacity building initiatives and through these, promoted and nurtured inquiry-focussed professional learning communities in the school. Key initiatives included:

1. Embedding the relevance of learning: focusing on actions in the classroom

Unlike many other schools which tended to use 'public lessons' (or 'showcase open lectures' which often involve a large number of internal and external audience members) and within-and-across-school competitions to create the pressure for teacher learning, Keqin wanted her teachers to ground their learning in their own classrooms. She understood the busyness of a teacher's school day and knew that it would be counter-productive if their learning and development plans were disconnected from their daily instructional activities.

> Teachers are busy. This is the reality of their work. We must think of ways to protect their time and energy, so that they can focus upon meaningful activities – those which are close to their work and lives in the classroom and which meet the needs of their development. As the principal, my mission is to serve teachers' professional growth and it is important that teachers can see it and feel it in practice.

Thus, at Zhongguncun No. 4 Primary School, teachers did not have to attend many administration-focussed staff meetings. Keqin encouraged a bottom-up approach to run staff meetings which were led by the staff and for the staff. They were designed to be an arena in which new ideas about teaching and learning were initiated, debated, negotiated and taken forward. Moreover, the topic of doing paperwork was also focussed on teachers' everyday practice so that writing reports became inherently an exercise of reflection on their actions in the classroom.

Additionally, Keqin and her teachers decided to focus their inquiries upon small, detailed actions and interactions in the classrooms and progressively fine-tune their practices over time. By engaging with smaller, more manageable sets of questions and problems, teachers were able to enjoy the benefits of their efforts to innovate and change within a relatively short time frame. More important, because they could see, feel and touch the fruits of their change efforts in their daily work, the mission of learning was no longer regarded as imposed formal tasks from the school management; rather, it became an essential part of their work and served to enrich their professional experiences with renewed interest and increased confidence, motivation and commitment to deepen and broaden the learning of their pupils.

2. Enriching the depth of learning: nurturing the inquiring teacher

One of the keys to Kegin's success in fostering teachers' courage and passion for learning and improvement was to create a research-focussed environment in the school in which teachers learned *how* to learn, change and improve.

Initially, teachers looked to books for answers to their practical queries, but soon found this approach rather disappointing because they were not sure how to

effectively transfer general theory into practice. Reflecting on this disappointment, Keqin and her teachers focused their attention on the classroom and brought in external expertise to help develop their ability to conduct meaningful, systematic inquiries in their classrooms and in the school. For example,

> We arranged in-house training on observation skills. Teachers were encouraged to learn to observe their pupils both inside and outside class, so that they could get to know them better and have an informed understanding of their personalities and learning needs. It is also important to bear in mind that pupils change: their needs may vary over time and their individuality evolves. Thus, following the training, we had weekly follow-up discussions on how to find ways of identifying the kinds of educational opportunities and approaches that were most appropriate and responsive to pupils' individual and collective learning and development needs.

Moreover, through her professional networks, Keqin's school became a member of a three-country (Australia, Canada and China) collaborative project which explored the processes and products of teacher researchers operating in networks of professional learning communities (Erickson et al. 2009). Being part of a wider international network of teacher researchers enabled her teachers to share teaching resources and narratives of teaching approaches with colleagues nationally and internationally. Not surprisingly, this proved to be another eye-opening and inspiring learning experience for them.

Over time many teachers in the school came to realise that conducting systematic investigations into their work settings could be an 'empowering' learning experience which enabled them to make evidence-informed judgements about the effectiveness of their practice and, also, gave them the confidence, autonomy and self-efficacy to develop creative ideas and solutions in their classrooms. There was also an increased sense of 'professional sensitivity' on the part of the staff for their pupils' differing and diverse needs and personalised teaching and learning began to emerge and flourish in the school.

3. Building collegiality: connecting teachers' aspirations for creative learning

The joy of sharing teachers' exciting 'professional empowerment' did not last long for Keqin for she was soon confronted with the challenge of finding ways to sustain teachers' creative energies and motivation to learn, innovate and change in the reality of heavy routines. Her leadership strategies extended to focus upon team building for the same reason as Deal and Peterson found in their work in American schools: 'Stars don't make a team; a team makes stars' (2009: 112).

Keqin was committed to enhancing channels of communication in the school so that new ideas flew, experiences and lessons were shared without delay and, more importantly, individual teacher's experience and expertise was used to create intellectual debate and collective wisdom. For example, a 30-min 'teach, think and research' forum was built into weekly staff meetings. Every month teachers collectively chose a topic of shared interest for research and discussion, and different project teams would report their successful solutions as well as compelling puzzles at the forum in order to explore ways of moving forward in a collaborative and collegial manner.

Critiques, comments, advice and suggestions from their colleagues (and sometimes external experts) were encouraged, appreciated and gradually received constructively.

Over time conducting inquiries in project teams became embedded in teachers' school life and reinforced the norm of collegial collaboration in the school. The project teams were formed on a voluntary basis, consisting of teachers within a single subject area and/or across different subject areas. Based upon their teaching and research interests, they chose the focus of their inquiry, the progression of which was also designed and monitored by teachers themselves. Peer observation was seen as an essential part of their inquiries, through which they learned to critique each other's practice in an open, professional and authentic manner and, also, appreciate each other's support and celebrate each other's success. One immediate benefit was that teachers no longer felt deeply worried about asking for help from their colleagues. Instead, professional learning communities began to emerge and take shape in the school, and in teachers' minds, they represented the unique character of their school.

> It was clear that our teachers became more creative, open minded and confident. They were used to being engaged in intellectual conversations about teaching and learning. Also, it was great to be able to share and celebrate individual teachers' best practice collectively and regularly, which, on the other hand, made teachers feel recognised and valued within the school community. Over time we could see that teachers' passion for collaboration and research had grown deeper into their hearts and minds and translated into a collective sense of efficacy and increased commitment for learning – which I believe is central to the school's renewal and success.

When learning becomes a communal activity, it bonds people's passion, wisdom, efficacy and commitment together to serve the betterment of children's learning and change and improvement in the school.

Development Phase Three (2007–2009): Enriching Collaborative Cultures of Learning and Development

As Zhongguancun No. 4 Primary School continued to grow and expand, defining, developing and enriching a school culture which fostered teachers' upbeat energy, enthusiasm and capacity for learning and renewal, became the centre of Keqin's leadership.

In reflecting on the journey of school improvement, it was clear to Keqin and her leadership team that organisational structures and systems alone do not guarantee a successful learning school. It is the positive and supportive school culture that connects the heart and soul of students and teachers and revitalises their energy and aspiration. The success of foundational strategies in Phase 1 and 2 had seen teachers become more enthusiastic, confident and committed learners and researchers. They were more self-driven and shared a stronger desire to change and improve. In order to reinforce such positive energy and sustain the successful transformation of the school, Keqin and her leadership team extended the focus of their attention to

shaping and enriching a distinct school culture which was inclusive, collegial, supportive, harmonious and inspirational for sustained learning and growth.

1. Redefining the school's mission and purpose: a higher calling

Deal and Peterson (2009) argue that 'At the hub of a school's culture are its mission and purpose – the revered focus of what people do' (2009: 61). Thus,

> Central to successful schools is a powerful sense of purpose that is focussed on students and learning. Developing and articulating a higher calling is the foundation of a strong culture. (Deal and Peterson 2009: 250)

A hallmark of Keqin's leadership in this phase was to redefine the mission and purpose in the school. In Phase 1 when there were no more than 30 teachers in the school, everyone's contribution was of crucial importance to the school's change and transformation. In order to capture their deep-seated commitment, she developed the motto 'Everyone is of immense value to the school!' 2–3 years on, when teachers were empowered to take greater responsibility for their learning and for the school's development, she knew that it was about time to invite teachers to revisit the underlying values and purposes of the school. A series of forums were organised in the school in which teachers were asked to look for detailed narratives of change and improvement in their daily school life and explore why, in their view, these stories best represented the identity and vision of the school. More important was that these discussions and debates continued in informal conversations in the staff room and after school. Gradually a new set of core values began to form and, as a result, two additional statements were added to the original school mission: 'Everyone plays a role in the development of the school! Everyone can make a difference!' In teachers' minds, these three statements were expressions of their collective sense of higher calling which gave them faith and direction of their actions.

> To build a successful school, it is important that everyone's strengths and contributions are recognised, valued and respected. Teachers will feel safe to try new ideas and be creative in their own classrooms if the school culture is inclusive and inspirational. Professional learning communities have become the 'flowerbeds' of creative thinking and collective wisdom in our school, because in these communities everyone is pulling towards a shared direction.

2. Perpetuating meaningful 'traditions'

Since Kegin's appointment to the principalship, the school had created a wide range of teaching forums, in-school and after-school activities and community events, all of which had a clear focus upon promoting and energising learning and collegiality. These 'classic' events and activities, such as the 30-min weekly forum on 'Teach, Think and Research', the annual research seminar series on teaching styles, and the system of 'collective consultation' in year groups, were now being treated as 'traditions' in the school and played a significant role in securing dialogue, communication and sharing of practice within the school community.

> In the event of the annual research seminar series, for example, external experts were invited to join our discussion, questioning, challenging and also supporting our teachers'

ideas and innovations. Discussion would be revolving around detailed processes in the classroom and our purpose was not to present a showcase, but to use teachers' stories and experiences as a springboard for a deep, reflective dialogue. Treating these events as traditions of the school passes a clear message to our teachers and the external community as to what we value in the school.

Thus, by treating teacher learning and development events as traditions, the core values of the school became embedded in the vision and culture of the school over time.

3. Restructuring the leadership: distributing responsibility with power

Restructuring the leadership began with the appointment of the team leaders of research projects in Phase 2, and aimed at tackling the problems caused by a lack of relevant experience in middle managers. However, even then the management structure of the school was still rather hierarchical, with the principal at the top of the management ladder, followed by deputy principal, middle managers and eventually the teachers. This meant that a message from the principal had to be passed on through three management levels before it could reach the teachers. Keqin described herself as the 'shepherd' of the school whose role was to direct the movements of her teachers and students.

Now that the systemic change and capacity building had born fruit, it became clear to her that the existing management structure was rather inefficient and could no longer serve the intellectual and social development of the school. This phase of distributed leadership began with two key actions. First, 'subject teams' and 'year groups' were created and their leaders worked alongside her to form a vertical leadership and management structure. Second, 'subject research teams' and 'project development teams' were formed to create a horizontal leadership and management platform. Through this 'mesh' management structure, the power and responsibility of decision-making were distributed to individual teams. Moreover, in order to avoid excessive division of labour and improve the efficiency of management, she and her leadership team also merged the 'Teaching Affairs Division' and the 'Moral Education Division' and established a Registrar's Office.

Close to the end of Phase 3, the distribution of leadership went wider and deeper. Five teaching and research centres were created, each having its distinct area of work. They were also responsible for the work of their project teams; and teachers had the freedom to choose the centres and research teams in which they would like to participate. Thus, individual teachers knew their roles and responsibilities and knew that they had the opportunities, support and a platform to change, improve and display their talent in the school community.

Discussion: Sustaining Passion for Learning

This account of a Chinese principal's work over 5 years demonstrates that sustaining a passion for learning is the key to effective capacity building and the success of the school. What we learn from the Principal's story is that her educational values and

ideals, reflective strategies, and layered (or phase differentiated) leadership practices shaped the internal process, school conditions and pedagogical practices that resulted in the transformation into a positive, collegial and learning-focussed school culture and through this, enhanced teacher quality and improved pupil learning over time. Last but not least, she possesses some distinct personal and professional qualities, such as passionate commitment and motivation, decisiveness, adaptability, emotional strength and resonance and a strong sense of moral purpose, which are found to be shared by many other successful leaders both within and outside China (Schein 2004; Mills 2005; Day and Leithwood 2007; Zhao et al. 2008). These findings are very much in line with observations of the international literature on successful school leadership and change. This emphasises the significance of the principal's role in establishing relationships and trust within and outside the school community and building individual and collective capacity to accomplish sustained improvement (Rosenholtz 1989; Tschannen-Moran 2004; Hargreaves and Fink 2006; Leithwood et al. 2006a, b; Day and Leithwood 2007; Robinson 2007; Fullan 2008; Day et al. 2010).

What we also learn is that she makes context sensitive judgements about the combination, sequencing and timing of her leadership strategies and distributes leadership progressively through different school development phases. This demonstrates striking similarities to the findings of a national study on the impact of successful school leadership on pupil outcomes in England (Day et al. 2009). More importantly, it provides clear evidence indicating the emergence of the 'more participative and even empowered style' (Mills 2005: http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/4869.html) of distributed leadership and effective professional learning communities in successful Chinese schools.

The empirical evidence presented in this chapter is based upon the 5-year development of one school. It is thus not in the author's intention to generalise this *successful* principal's qualities and practice to all her peers in Chinese primary schools. Nonetheless, when her story is located in the wider international literature on *successful* schools and *successful* principals, there are important and striking similarities which are present, regardless of the differences in the cultural, societal, political and socio-economic contexts of the schools led by Keqin and her western peers. This observation is in startling contrast to the overemphasis which existing cross-cultural research places upon differences between organisations across countries (e.g. Hofstede 1980, 1984, 2001). Whilst it is important to understand the differences in institutional arrangements across different cultures and countries (Hofstede 1996), it is equally important that we do not lose sight of the passion, aspirations and leadership qualities and strategies shared by *successful* leaders nationally and internationally.

There are two important conceptual and methodological issues which this raises. First, whilst it *is* important to employ a cross-cultural comparative approach to achieve a more holistic understanding of the similarities and differences regarding school leadership in different countries (Walker and Dimmock 2002), there remains a lack of robust comparative studies which collect comparable data in schools across regional and national cultures. For example, although some studies claim the

observation of significant differences between Chinese and western management (e.g. Wang 2007; Law 2009), the empirical data were collected in China alone. This is not to mention that leadership practices and strategies may differ even within a single culture or country depending upon the characteristics of the school contexts (Gu et al. 2008).

Second, culture is a fluid concept and different cultures encounter, interact and influence each other in what is now a global village. Such influences cannot be ignored in comparative studies. Hofstede's work, for example was largely grounded in empirical evidence collected in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, the scale, speed and extent of globalisation in the twenty-first century is 'qualitatively distinct' (Little and Green 2009: 166). The sheer rapidity of change and its accumulated effects have altered the character of work and many features of contemporary living in a fundamental way (Held et al. 1999; Coolahan 2002; Little and Green 2009). In a world that is much 'flatter' (Friedman 2005) than before, it is not surprising to see in research on school leadership and administration that *successful* leaders have an international vision and outlook and are keen to develop professional networks both within and beyond cultural borders. Indeed, Keqin proudly describers her school as 'an international school': '*China is integrating into the world and we are proud to be at the forefront of such change*!'

> Hierarchical structures may not necessarily be a bad thing. However, they should not be used to pass on orders or power. This will not make a successful school. They can be implemented more constructively so that they allow people to work in a systematic way and through this, promote a new order in the organisation. The principal may have power over teachers' behaviour, but not their hearts. 'Power grabbing' is a rather dangerous way of managing a school. It would be much better and more efficient if the principal focused upon building capacity and nurturing teachers' motivation so that power could be distributed to them. When power is distributed through the structures and systems, individuals are more likely to develop a strong sense of organisational responsibility and feel empowered to achieve their potential and ultimately, the potential of the organisation.

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Chapter 55
Creating a Learning Culture in Schools: An Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities with Special Reference to the Egyptian Context

Atta Taha Zidan

Teaching vs. Learning

The relationship between learning and teaching is generally viewed as simple, straightforward, and logical. This is so simply because it tends to be assumed that learning – and probably *all* learning – is the natural outcome of teaching. This is more or less what schools and is a practice worldwide that has been passed from generation to generation. Otherwise it might well be asked what are schools for? Examination of the existing relationship of teaching and learning and their nature is a necessary prelude to deepening our understanding of the teaching–learning process at schools and, more importantly, in order to explore the contribution of *learning*, rather than simply teaching, in the overall development of a child or young person's potential.

Since the teaching–learning relationship is perceived by many policy makers, administrators, educators, teachers, and, therefore, students as a device for helping students to obtain the highest possible scores on achievement tests, it is perhaps little wonder that "teaching" takes precedence over "learning" in our educational institutes; given subject-matter and time constraints dictated by school schedules and the so-called "academic year."

Several questions follow in the exploration of whether good teaching results in good learning. Does improving the quality of teaching lead inevitably to enhancement of learning outcomes? What is the role of teaching in refining or enhancing the learner's abilities to learn as against his or her ability to reproduce academic knowledge? How frequently is teaching directed to upgrading the learner's capacity to learn on his/her own? How realistic is such an aspiration given the reality of schools and classrooms in many parts of the world? If teachers, under extraordinary pressing policy, administrative, school, and community demands to improve the

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results of students, carrying the burden for teaching their subject matter as best as they can, why then are they usually the first to be blamed when school graduates exhibit shallow knowledge and display meager experience of people, places, and things?

With this focus on teaching and teacher-centered approaches it becomes a process of "indoctrination" in the sense that students simply "receive" what teachers "preach." There appears to be a widely shared misconception as to the nature of a teaching–learning relationship which facilitates learning, rather than as an anti-learning, climate. The extent to which this is true depends to a large degree on the scientific, technological, economic, or cultural level of any given society. "Indoctrination" may be said to prevail when the teacher is a well-recognized authority of time-proven knowledge, and wisdom, and his/her prime function in a teaching situation is to convey that knowledge to unquestioning learners. The student's success, or lack of it, thus becomes an artifact of his/her failure to adapt to the teacher's presentation of the information. 'Indoctrination' has at best a weak relationship with pedagogy and it fails to promote genuine learning. It rests on three mistakes (Adler 2010):

1. It is mistakenly assumed that teacher activity is always the major, and sometimes the sole, cause of the learning that occurs.
2. It is mistakenly supposed that what students learn from their teachers is something they passively receive.
3. It is mistakenly supposed that genuine knowledge can be acquired without understanding what is known.

Historically, the existence of teacher-centered classroom methodology has been justified by evident interest in the acquisition of knowledge and subject matter and, in practice, it has been less demanding and challenging compared with the requirements and skills needed to apply the learner-centered approach. One of the main reasons for the relatively easier adoption of teacher-centered instruction is a prevalent tendency for teachers to teach in the same way they were taught. As the predominant teaching method is mostly lecturing, teachers repeat what worked well with them when they were students. Research on teaching supports the claim that teachers teach they way they learned (Stitt-Gohdes, cited by Brown 2003). According to Hayes and Allison, cited in Brown 2003), such teachers are typically field-independent, that is, they are more content-oriented and prefer to use more formal teaching methods. They favor less student involvement and more structured in-class activities. One merit of this teacher-centered approach, Brown (2003) claims, is that it suits dependent students – those who like to be told what they should learn and who wish to be given the resources which are appropriate to that kind of acquired knowledge and skills.

The question now, however, is whether teachers who have long practiced teaching the way they were taught are able to modify their approach. Pratt (1998) presented five teaching perspectives and urged teachers to identify, articulate, and justify their

approaches to teaching instead of sticking to one teaching practice or another (Brown 2003). These perspectives include:

1. Transmission: The teacher's focus is on content and on determining what students should learn and how they should learn with teacher feedback directed to their errors.
2. Development: Valuing student prior knowledge and student learning is directed to the development of increasingly complex ways of reasoning and problem solving.
3. Apprenticeship: Providing students with authentic tasks in real work settings.
4. Nurturing: The teacher's focus is on interpersonal aspects of students' learning and getting to know them by responding to their emotional and intellectual needs.
5. Social Reform: Teachers relate ideas to students' lives.

However, how responsive are these perspectives proposed by Pratt (1998) to the actual demands of a real learning setting? In other words, if teachers adapt their teaching methodology to accommodate different approaches, such as those above, would this mark a shift to a learning environment? Of course, adopting approaches such as these may contribute significantly to improving teacher performance by improving teaching behaviors. However, graded and carefully designed teaching phases may indirectly invite students to take charge of their own learning aided by such systematic and comprehensive teacher implementation of Pratt's five perspectives. Nonetheless, the actual conditions for a learning, rather than simply efficient teaching culture, may still be lacking so taking us to the next section of this chapter in order to answer the question – why does a culture of learning needs to be created in our schools?

Why Is a Culture of *Learning* in Our Schools Necessitated?

To learn, the learner must be the one who does the learning. Even the most effective and creative methods of teaching cannot secure actual learning until the learner is willing to become actively involved. This is why educators worry about students' passivity and lack of interest, despite the "blood and sweat" exerted in upgrading or developing teaching tactics and making available more attractive instructional media and methodology. Herein lies one basic difference between a dynamic learning environment and a passive one. The most a passive student can do is to actively absorb the knowledge and information taught by teachers who are experts on the content of their subject matter and who are able to manage classrooms efficiently. By contrast, active learners enjoy a dynamic learning atmosphere where – through appropriate learning situations and opportunities – they become engaged in thinking, reflecting, doing, and experimenting with things in a relaxed but demanding learning environment. This can be effected through teacher coaching and through

collaborative peer and group work. Instead of acquiring knowledge and skills by means of rote-memorization and reciting information as in traditional classrooms, learners initiate their own learning through the reconstruction of inert knowledge and experiences to fit their own schema according to a particular phase of personal growth and interpersonal connections.

Learners exhibit immense variation in their abilities to learn and the nature and scope of their learning abilities shapes their self-efficiency as learners. It is to be expected that only a small proportion of learners will simply adjust unproblematically to a given classroom climate. Only a minority will progress in mastering skills, acquiring pertinent knowledge, enriching their experiences, strengthening social bonds with their peers, teachers and others, and widening their circles of social interactions without seeking outside help or encouragement. A larger majority will lack the motivation, the ability for self-direction or self-learning, and need significant support in order to activate their readiness for meaningful learning.

Culture, School Climate, and School Culture

It is common knowledge that the word "culture" is generally taken to mean a society's traditions, habits, beliefs, codes of conduct, ways of eating, dressing, doing things, and so on. Alternatively, culture can be defined as the shared frame of reference that includes values, communication, and ways of interpreting experiences as expressed in a society's customs, legends, ceremonies, myths, stories, and rituals. The term "school culture" has in recent years emerged as an important dimension of school organizational research (Chrispeels 1992: 12). While "climate" or "ethos" are widely used to describe the conditions that make a school, the concept of culture is more subtle and comprises a complex of values and assumptions about how to perceive and do things within a given school context. In considering the specific similarities between "culture" and "climate," we find that both terms describe the prevailing school environment that influences the behaviors of school staff. However, whereas school climate refers to the way in which the school building and classroom levels, school culture refers to a set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and shared ideas that are expressive of the school's identity and standardized behaviors (Best Practice Briefs, no. 31, 2004: 1). Culture and climate may be described as all positive or negative perceptions attached to the school on the part of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community at large. Stephens (2003) stated that understanding a school's culture is an essential prerequisite for any internal or external change in the quality of education. He also argued that any improvement in educational quality should come first from within the school itself and argued that "within" denotes a complex web of beliefs, norms, values, as well as social and power relationships and emotions.

The Larger Context of Schools in Egypt: The System of Education

The system of education in Egypt is classified as the largest in North Africa with approximately 16 million students and around 37,000 teachers, over 45% of who do not have educational qualifications (not graduates of faculties or institutes of education). The educational ladder consists of three levels of education: basic education (grades 1–9), secondary education (grades 10–12), and higher and university education. There are three types of schools in Egypt that include public schools, private schools, and publicly funded, privately managed schools. Other several international education systems are also in operation such as the American Diploma, the international French Lycee, German Abitur, etc. (El Baradei and El Baradei 2004: 11).

According to a national report on education prepared by the National Center for Educational Research and Development in Egypt (Shehab et al. 2004), the state of Egypt has identified several dimensions for improving education in the country with an overall goal of quality education and excellence for all. To address this general goal, several dimensions of improvement have been identified, covering a large number of areas that include educational structure and administration, a focus on total quality, the role of community, environmental education, educational technology, active learning, curriculum development, and career education. In Egypt, quality education has been highly valued by the public, and among rulers it has been regarded as a major mechanism for progress and modernization, a source of legitimacy of regimes and a measure of their patriotism and commitment to the masses. Thus, education is considered an issue of national security, national integrity, and political stability (Sayed 2006: 26–27).

Weaknesses and Strengths of the System

Although the Egyptian government has placed the issue of educational reform at the top of its agenda since the beginning of the 1990, in one of his speeches on the occasion of the change of cabinet in July 2004 (Al-Ahram, September 1st, 2004), the President of Egypt declared that the outcomes of the educational process were not yet satisfactory and still required a great deal of reform. As of 1990, the government had not enforced the laws which require school-age children to attend school. In some areas, 50% of formally enrolled children did not, in fact, attend school. In some rural areas and in Upper Egypt only 50% of enrolled children attended and, overall, only half of the students enrolled in the primary school completed all 6 years of instruction. An observer of the educational condition in Egypt at present would notice that there are indeed considerable reform efforts and initiatives taking place, yet this has not resulted in high rates of economic growth. This might be attributed

to the poor quality of education, its unequal distribution, and low economic returns. In an extensive study of Egyptian education, El Baradei and El Baradei (2004) provided a lengthy account of the major weaknesses and threats that have long minimized the system's chances to move effectively towards achieving quality education. Weaknesses included the following:

1. Financial problems: Such as shortage of financial resources, physical facilities, inefficient allocation and utilization of resources, and misallocation of financial resources.
2. Quality problems: These take the form of private tutoring, lack of mastery of basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, focus on enforcement of rules and regulations rather than on student learning, high classroom density, high student/teacher ratio, high drop out, and repeating rates and students' over-reliance on non-ministry of education market material for study, thus wasting millions of Egyptian pounds spent on textbook publications by the ministry.
3. Access problems: These relate high illiteracy rates of students estimated around an average of 20%, enrollment gaps, gender disparities, income disparities and large inequalities in educational attainment of the poor, and rural disparities particularly in rural areas and upper Egypt.
4. Low income returns of education: As evident in increasingly soaring costs of education and high household costs paralleled with low earnings by graduates that is the result of low quality of education as reflected in the mismatch between educational outcomes and the requirements of labor market.
5. Management Problems: In the form of absence of democracy and lack of participation of students, teachers, and stakeholders in decision making, predominance of bureaucracy at different levels of administration, with seniority as the most important qualification for promotion or appointment in higher administrative or technical posts (Specialized National Council on Education, Report no. 23, 1995–1996: 26); a passive culture of obedience to officials, ineffective systems and mechanisms of performance appraisal, over staffing of public administration offices, lack of scientific, rational decision making, and a clear mismatch between education content and outcomes and labor market needs.

In analyzing the impact of reform initiatives provided by international agencies designed to improve education in Egypt in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE), Sayed (2006: 145–146) criticized the MOE, stating that the ministry itself "is perceived by its internal and external publics to be authoritarian, centralized, and hierarchical state institution that advocates democracy only on a ceremonial level."

A report by El Baradei and El Baradei (2004: 41) outlined a number of challenges. These included increase in cost of educational services, the high rate of population growth especially in the category of school-age children, demand for quality education regarding graduates' capabilities and skills, and the incredibly rapid pace of change in technology, science, and communications that require higher abilities and adaptation.

The strengths of the system are reflected in the following factors (El Baradei and El Baradei 2004: 31):

 1. A long history and experience in education since the 19th century.
 2. Significant contributions in constructing the educational systems of other Arab countries.
 3. Free education at all levels of education since the sixties, including higher education.
 4. An impressive rate of public expenditure on education since 1990–1991s (Total public spending on education tremendously increased from 4.7 billion L.E. in 1990–1991 to 18.1 billion L.E. in 2000–2001).
 5. Remarkable expansion in the number of schools since the July 23rd, 1952 Revolution with an unprecedented increase since the 1990s as the number of schools built in the 1990s is double the number of schools built in Egypt over the past 100 years.
 6. Developing new school models as the community school, the one-class school, kindergartens, small schools, the quasi desert school, etc.
 7. Improvement in enrollment rates which increased in the 1990s, according to official estimates, to 26.7%.
 8. Increased attention to the education of girls.
 9. Large continuous national efforts, sometimes in collaboration with international agencies and sponsor, at reforming the education system.
10. Greater emphasis on the training of teachers and participation from the community in improving the quality of education.
11. Establishing national educational standards in Egypt in 2003 and upgrading them in 2007.
12. Current serious efforts at decentralizing education starting with three governorates: Luxor, Fayoum, and Ismailia).

The report also identified a number of opportunities for reform (p. 41) in the education system such as human capital and brainpower if utilized properly; international concern about the need to reform education as part of the millennium development goals; and the possibility of cooperation and coordination with other Arab countries in developing and implementing reform plans.

School Management in Egypt

At the school level, the management structure is for the most long-serving staff to belong to the director cadre, whether from another school or area, as the general director of school administration. While there may be other directors within the one school, they are usually of rank B such as deputies and senior teachers (Ministerial decrees no. 20, 1980 and ministerial decree no. 120, 1989). In theory, the school director's roles are (Hejji 1994: 418):

1. Setting school goals and planning school educational activities.
2. Organizing how to implement the school plan.

3. Monitoring teacher professional performance.
4. Sustaining good staff relationships at school.
5. Co-working with and supporting teachers, students, parents, and activities teams in plans and tasks.
6. Making and taking the necessary school decisions.
7. Interacting and communicating to get things done.
8. Establishing and maintaining school–community interaction.
9. Being responsible for school financial and administrative work.

The actual implementation of these tasks and responsibilities, however, with regard to the director's educational and professional roles such as setting school goals, the planning of activities, and co-working with other staff, parents, or student involvement is incidental rather than being a systematic, common practice in school life. Failure to cater for this particular dimension of the educational and professional development of students and teachers by school management has led to many significant criticisms (Zahran 1995: 141) of the MOE and of government polices which allow a significantly high percentage of teachers, directors, and other higher-level administrators at the district (*idara*), directorate (*moderyya*), or ministry (*wizara*) levels to be appointed to managerial and administrative posts without the necessary educational qualifications and credentials.

Other criticisms refer to the dominant patterns of bureaucratic policies and extreme centralization of almost all financial, administrative processes, and to the day-to-day setting and scheduling of the school day. This results in noticeable lack of participation of local management and administration at the governance level in decision making at the ministry level, proving to have negative effects on the implementation processes. Being excluded from the decision-making circle, administrators at the governance level not only miss being part of the decision-making process but also lose out on the opportunity to truly and properly understand the rationale, purpose, and intent of decisions made and how best to put them into effect. Currently in Egypt, there are numerous MOE efforts taking place to reform education which have contributed indeed to a favorable climate for change and improvement, yet it is difficult to credit the impact of these reform initiatives and plans to the policies and practices of educational management and administration at the system level. Nor is there evidence of the realization of good governance, one that is democratic, efficient, and decentralized.

The Egyptian Classroom

In general, classrooms in Egyptian schools are densely populated and while there is a remarkable increase in the number of classroom built since the 1990s, a sizeable proportion of schools are not well-equipped nor properly furnished. In urban centers such as Cairo and Alexandria, the typical classroom will contain 80 students with one teacher, a blackboard and a supply of chalk, very little technology, a few books, and limited teaching resources (Rachel 2010). In fact, the vast majority

of these schools are not ideally designed as educational buildings and are characterized by weak infrastructure and lack of facilities and other school services. In respect of basic education, Law no. 139, 1981, article 16, stated that "Basic education aims to develop pupils' abilities, aptitudes and interests, and to provide them with a reasonable set of values, behaviors, knowledge, and practical skills in accordance with their varying circumstances and environments" (Specialized National Councils, 1995–1996: 15).

In implementation of this basic education law, there is a wide gap between theory and practice. In classrooms, even in grades 1–3, pupils are taught separate school subjects in Arabic, math, social studies, etc. Total separation is made in teaching these school subjects and other activities such as physical education, social activities, hobbies, and so on. No integration is made between subject matter studied by children and outside of classroom or school activities, projects, or other extracurricular assignments. The so-called "practical domains" are taught independently of the school curriculum. These domains, like the agricultural, the industrial, the commercial domains, have their own teachers and technical supervisors and have a crafts, career-oriented focus. Attempts are not likely made to invest on these domains of activities to further children's understanding of curricular content or to expand their applications of learned facts, concepts, and values (Specialized National Councils 1995–1996: 16–18).

Prospects of a Culture of Learning in Egyptian Education

In Egypt, education is highly valued by the public and has always been considered by rulers a major mechanism of progress and modernization, a source of legitimacy of regimes and a measure of their patriotism and commitment to the masses (Sayed 2006: 24). Education is also viewed as an issue of national security, national integrity. and political stability (Sayed 2006: 27–31). The Egyptian government is committed to a highly ambitious and forward-looking program of education; one that enables school children and students to communicate, think critically and problem solve (Rachel 2010).

In spite of the chronic problems and obstacles that have long burdened the Egyptian education system, such as the ones discussed above, many of which have accumulated from previous decades, the visitor to many schools and classrooms today is likely to notice some positive signs of staff awareness and willingness to improve their schools. And yet they need encouragement and to be shown how improvement is to be made. A large numbers of teachers, and to a lesser degree, administrators want to see classroom practices of teaching and learning as well as educational policies changed for the better. As a result of MOE approval of "the teacher cadre" as an essential professional practice that has led to reasonable increases in teachers' salaries, the expansion in teacher training programs in cooperation with internationally funded education reform programs, the establishment of the national agency for quality assurance and educational accreditation (NAQAA)

and general public awareness of the role of community support and actual participation in securing quality education for their children. As a consequence the climate and culture of the Egyptian school is being gradually changing, not without resistance, to a more conducive environment of better teaching and learning. These changes are embraced by a number of pioneering schools, especially, with regard to basic education.

Teachers' and school management's essential improvement has been, in many cases, demonstrated by their understanding of and familiarity with core reform concepts and language of a broad domain of reform plans, tools, and strategies. This extends as well to preliminary knowledge, at least, of reform processes, topics and key reform components and areas. Such terminology as school "vision," "mission," "school goals," "self-assessment," "improvement plans," "team work," "active learning," "cooperative learning," "comprehensive assessment." "student portfolios," "quality assurance," "accreditation" are indicative of "something" positive taking place in work climate and school culture. Equally important, however, is school staff realization of the school's role in making their own school educational improvement in respect of school plans and needs assessment processes which they themselves are in charge of. Speaking of her own experience as EDC senior education director (Education Development Center) in visiting several Egyptian schools and seeing teachers and administrators at work and in training sessions organized by the USAID-funded Education Reform Program in Egypt, Rachel, Christina described Egyptian teachers and administrators as having a very high level of commitment. Most teachers were, she said, characterized by their openness and willingness to try new things and to do things differently; and that they are excited at seeing their students engaging with the lesson in new ways. She said, "Really dynamic things are happening in the schools. Teachers, parents, and communities are working together to improve educational quality and the environment in schools. Students are excited about learning in ways you wouldn't have seen years ago. Many of these schools have made enormous strides" (Rachel 2010).

A School Culture of Learning as a Maker of Educational Quality

Every school has its own unique culture normally mirrored in how the school staff view their own work and do things with their students and with one another. However, it must be admitted that finding out about or, more challenging, "defining" a given school culture is by no means an easy task unless a careful analysis is made of that specific culture. Also, it is no secret that knowing about one's own school culture may be as difficult for an "insider" as for an outsider. Indeed, it may be easier for a school visitor, say, to somehow to distinguish aspects of a culture that school members themselves, for one reason or another, have failed to notice.

A significant proportion of school culture, however, is implicit and unseen; it exists in the minds of individuals in the form of perceptions, beliefs, judgments,

likes and dislikes, or other mental constructs regarding buildings, procedures, functions, and relationships. In this particular instance, school culture here is both *assumed* and *raw*. In an assumed raw culture of a school, everyone and, in particular staff, have agreed *implicitly*, and unconditionally perhaps, to act the way they have always done. This entails a "freeze" on innovative interventions or critical feedback, allowing only minimal disturbance to take place so as to get things done the way they intentionally or unintentionally, need to be accomplished. This school culture is "raw" in the sense that school staff have not made any attempt to find out about themselves and about their school in a manner that deepens their understanding and expands their experiences about who they are, where they are, what they want to do for the school, and how to go about it. They simply have not explored their school culture, as yet!

And yet, determining a school culture is prerequisite for any significant educational improvement in school learning. In the previous example of assumed and unexplored school cultures, the opportunity for leadership to enhance educational quality, or to improve teacher performance, or to raise students' learning outcomes, is non-existent. This is not to mention the other important school role in transforming school into a learning community, one in which students and staff abilities as self-learners and active members of a collaborative team can be appropriately developed. Thus, staff- guided exploration of the dimensions, features, and characteristics of their school culture is the very first step towards establishing a dynamic and productive culture of learning in schools. Next steps require reaching consensus among school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders about the existing school culture profile and how to adapt that culture to be more conducive to a high-performance, ambitious and most self-fulfilling learning culture.

The Relationship Between Quality Education and School Learning Culture

While the conditions of a positive school culture mutually and forcefully intersect with the requirements of achieving quality education in our schools, establishment of a healthy school culture for learning remains a valid safeguard for continued quality and, equally important, for enhancing school *image* as a community agent for better education of all children. At the same time, improvement in school culture provides school staff and students with an attractive, self-rewarding and self-fulfilling work environment. To create such a school climate, conscious efforts need to be exerted but such efforts have to be guided and derived from a transparent vision of what kind of a school leaders teachers, students, and parents want to create. What is it that needs to be done to substitute the existing school culture by a more attractively productive and effective one? What are the basic conditions for a conducive school culture with the highest possible potential for learning and quality teaching?

The literature on quality education and improved learning outcomes offers a number of preconditions for better learning gains. Nonetheless, a reader of educational literature may notice that more emphasis is attached to teaching rather than to learning. One reason for this is the overwhelming interest in introducing innovative programs and instructional strategies that place all the emphasis on the teacher's capabilities and instructional process. The time devoted to genuine self-learning is remarkably limited. It raises the question of how a learning culture can be injected into existing school systems, one that is aimed at extending students' opportunities for self-reflection and discovery learning?

A distinction needs to be made between two distinct, yet complementary and inherently interrelated, functions of school, on the one hand as an educational institution for community providing students with quality education and, on the other hand as furnishing a sustainable learning context not only for its students and staff but also as a learning resource for parents. It is to be expected that there will be substantial variations among schools and communities in their ability to undertake either role especially the second one.

Generally, schools do the best they can to achieve high success rates for their students. Once this goal is achieved, more or less to the satisfaction of higher-level administrators, and possibly parents, the school, it is believed, has done its work. What is valued, adopted, and perpetuated is contingent on how properly and clearly performance measures are developed and internalized by school staff and other stakeholders.

Despite that the theory and practice of schooling around the world, has historically been geared to generally achieving previously set goals of education by previously devised and "time-proven" means of instruction, it is worth citing two insights into the incremental and detrimental consequences of schooling on learning. The first is from Dreeben (1977: 544–548) who explored how schooling contributes to the learning of norms with regard to the two norms of "independence" and "achievement." He argued that as children join school they start to acknowledge the fact that there are tasks they must do alone and in a given way. As a norm, "independence" refers "to a cluster of meanings: doing things on one's own, being self-reliant, accepting personal responsibility for one's behavior, act self-sufficiently, and handing tasks with which … one can rightfully expect the help of others." (Dreeben 1977: 544). Similarly, pupils come to understand that they should perform their tasks the best they can by competing against standards of excellence making use of teacher and parental assistance. As certain pupils, in the course of time, differentiate themselves in "achievement" depending on how well they perform on classroom tests, their consistently successful performance requires them to cope with the consequences of their own excellence in dealing with their peers in outside-of-school social activities.

The role of schooling is thus one of opening up to pupils the experiences of both winning and losing, While establishing a frame of mind that is conducive to achievement pupils are expected to learn how to cope with both success and failure.

A second, but detrimental effect on learning is given by Trubowitz (2005: 174) who described a typical teaching–learning situation where teachers are "besieged by external impositions on instructional time …A steady stream of messages emanating from the school's main office, administrators, colleagues, and others fragments the flow of teacher-student interaction."

Interest in school culture and climate, and educational research on schools as learning environments and learning communities has accelerated in recent years with an overall goal of exploring and identifying the best circumstances able to maximize both learning opportunities and contexts. In a focus group organized as part of The Education and Training Program 2010 (European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture), participants identified four conditions needed for the creation of a learning community in schools. These included vision and planning, culture and change, support and motivation, and flexibility. They also raised a number of key questions to ensure further development of schools as learning communities. The questions were:

- To what extent a country's vision for schools is shared and understood by all.
- Are school leaders and teachers encouraged or required to plan continuing professional development (CPD) 3–5 years ahead? Are their plans, if any, supported by all concerned, and deployed to improve school practice, and can they be developed?
- What steps does a country take to create conditions that allow more innovative learning to flourish in schools?
- How much support is available to assist school communities to review their culture?
- To what extent do teachers use cooperative learning in schools?
- How are teachers encouraged to continuously develop their skills for teaching and learning?
- To what extent are mentors available to guide beginning teachers and beginning school leaders?
- Is support made available to school leaders adequate?
- How are school leaders encouraged to set high expectations for teachers and pupils?
- How available to each school teacher are opportunities of structured CPD plans?
- To what extent are CPD plans individualized, and directly related to teachers' professional needs?
- How often is regular student feedback sought and acted upon in schools?
- To what extent are school leaders and schools encouraged and supported to further develop their staff?
- To what extent do accountability systems include reference to schools as learning communities?
- Is the wider community, including teacher education, supportive of schools to become learning communities?
- Who is in charge of ensuring the conditions necessary for making schools learning communities and that they are introduced, monitored, and supported?

All of these questions are naturally driven by tangible concerns, interest, and motivation to make a marked shift from a conventional teaching-dominant school environment to a learning-for-all, self-regulated learning community. In face of the current worldwide demands for quality education and accreditation, and better schools for all children, it is legitimate to anticipate that this visioning and reflection phase would result in more promising prospects and the development of a genuine learning culture in schools.

Conditions for Creating a School Culture of Learning

Having explored the relationship between a school culture for learning and the realization of educational quality, what constitutes a learning culture in our schools? I argue that five major conditions are necessary to establish a culture for learning, an urgent priority for Egyptian schools. These five conditions may well apply to a wide range of schools which share similar contexts and concerns in other parts of the world. These conditions are:

1. Capable leadership and administration
2. Empowered teachers
3. Self-regulated, autonomous learners
4. Authentic, meaningful learning
5. Effective, open communication

Capable Leadership and Administration

The role of school leadership, especially that of the school director, and other school management staff should not be underestimated in inspiring the spirit for improving school as an educational service provider and as a community agent for offering quality education to its children. This implies raising awareness of the school's current status, its strengths and limitations, the vision for establishing a healthier school climate, and a willingness to develop a more favorable learning environment. It also implies identifying school norms, exploring performance rates and work relationships as well as ways in which leadership roles are such as to lead school staff, students and community leaders, and stakeholders in an improvement process. This may be described as a two-fold process of (1) identifying existing school capabilities as a proper context for learning and (2) exploring how innovatively the school cultural identity as a rich, self-fulfilling, and natural learning environment can be founded. Citing Jessop (1998), Stephens (2003: 28) wrote that evidence from the Loreto Day School in India indicates, for example, that leadership and quality management requires, "a shared vision and explicit collective values as a catalyst for profound changes within a school setting …." When leaders and managers enjoy the power of ideas, have the ability of decision making, the

desire for educational transformation and the balancing of requirements for change and those for stability, they are in a better position to stimulate school improvement and to forge a unique learning culture.

The role of school leadership/management is crucial in building a culture of trust and ensuring mutual respect among school staff and students and between the school and its local community. Trust building will be best effected in a transparent, relaxing, and democratic environment. It is also likely to be facilitated by flexible, responsive, and support in a climate which foregrounds the professional exchange of ideas and experiences. To elaborate on the idea of balancing change and stability requires supportive administrators who play a key role in relaxing possible tensions of teachers, students, and parents which may arise from acute pressures on achieving high pass rates. Offering teachers powerful professional development programs need to be such that teachers have the confidence to discriminate intelligently as to key concepts and principles rather than dutifully covering the ground as dictated by the school curriculum. Leadership carries the responsibility for ensuring that professional development is of a quality which empowers staff to improve their skills and enhance personal growth.

Empowered Teachers

Teachers' awareness of the need to involve learners in the learning process and their willingness to guide their students towards embedding this in classroom routine is crucial. However, pressures of time and need to cover the curriculum inhibits teachers, confining them to the ritual presentation of lesson material and to a diet of exercises and homework and other outside-of-school assignments dictated by passive replication of subject matter dealt with in the classroom.

Teacher empowerment which enhanced students' abilities to learn starts with awareness raising at the school level. Yet, awareness raising is only the first step. It has to be followed by other essential approaches to building teacher capacity and sustaining high-quality professional development. Particularly crucial in this respect is the training of teachers in active and cooperative learning strategies, self-learning, critical thinking, problem solving strategies, and self-assessment protocols. Focus on group interaction, management and leadership skills, communication skills and strategies, computer and internet skills as well as collaborative learning techniques and team work are also among the important training areas for all teachers. It has to be stressed, however, that for this shift to occur in our classrooms it will take determination, commitment, ability, and courage on the part of all players whether at central and local levels of formal education. It means teachers systematically revisiting the curricula, teaching culture, and methodologies in their schools, and among schools, with a commitment to redesign curricula from a learning, rather than a teaching perspective, from a product-based to a process-based context and from a structure of individual teacher-accountability to a whole-system accountability.

Self-Regulated, Autonomous Learners

There is an argument that all learning is an autonomous, self-regulated activity, meaning that unless the learner gets involved in the learning process no real learning will actually take place. Teachers' persistent efforts are, of course, mainly directed towards facilitating learners' role in managing their own effort and time to learn on their own and acting on their own incentive. According to Chen (2002: 11), citing Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997), "Self-regulated learning is a self-initiated action that involves goal setting, self-monitoring (metacognition), time management, and physical and social environment regulation." Similarly, learner autonomy refers to the learner's ability to accept responsibility for his/her own learning. Autonomous learners are also self-directed and monitor and evaluate their progress and the extent to which learning is achieved (Schunk 2005). Reflectivity, motivation, self-confidence, and willingness to cooperate with other peers and teachers are effective strategies that produce better learning (Pintrich et al. 1994).

Again, an issue here is how teachers and school leadership are able to foster self-regulatory learning and learner autonomy in formal education amidst pressures of formal curriculum demands, time limitations, diverse learner needs, teacher shortage, and effective school management.

Establishing a learning culture needs to take place as early as possible, building on and extending pre-school children's natural innovative abilities to learn to primary school-learning settings and consequently in higher grades and university education. Success in reaching this goal and the extent to which our students become self-reliant learners is an index of the awareness, willingness, and ability of local and central levels of educational administration, faculty and school communities to redefine school role as a teacher-supported learning environment.

Authentic, Meaningful Learning

Traditionally, the primary role of school has been on the transmission of knowledge. Emphasis has been on the extraction of isolated facts, often in a de-contextualized abstract form. This abstract knowledge obtained at schools and universities does not, however, serve problem-solving in real-life situations which causes students to regard knowledge as a final product rather than a tool to be dynamically applied to solve problems (Herrington and Oliver 2000: 1). Collins (1996), cited in Goldman (1997) identified five central principles for a shift from the dominant model of learning as transmission models to constructivist and social constructivist models. These are:

1. Deep knowledge in a content area as well as conditions for acquiring it are important for effective thinking, learning, and problem solving.
2. Fluent enabling skills such as literacy and computational skills are fundamental for the acquisition of knowledge.

3. Working on authentic, meaningful problems is highly motivating to students to learn.
4. Feedback and provision for opportunities for students to revise their own work based on given feedback enhance learning.
5. Social structures that help students feel valued and respected encourage learning.

Current literature suggests that relevant, usable knowledge can best be gained in learning environments that have the characteristics of situated learning.

That is, learning contexts in which the following provisions are made:

1. Authentic contexts that reflect how knowledge will be used in real life.
2. Authentic learning activities.
3. Access to the modeling of processes and expert performance.
4. Multiple roles and perspectives.
5. Collaborative construction of knowledge.
6. Reflection to allow abstraction to be formed.
7. Articulation to make tact knowledge more explicit.
8. Coaching and scaffolding by teacher at critical times.
9. Authentic assessment of learning.

In fact, authentic learning material, meaningful instructional methodology, and authentic assessment procedures are all vital contributors to the relevance and meaningfulness of school learning and tasks. While the teacher's role in this respect cannot be overemphasized, curriculum design, the planning of extracurricular activities, of equal importance are school policies which target practical and usable knowledge and skill areas that significantly equip the learners with effective tools for dealing successfully with real-life contacts and problems. To address this problem more realistically, careful reflection over curricula and school activities and daily practices has to be a carefully planned process that is carried out with collective participation and responsibility among school administration and faculty. The purpose of this crucial process is to re-plan school work and learning content to ensure greater authenticity and meaningfulness of the largest possible number of learning content, knowledge, and activities. Again, assuming such a challenging responsibility requires the presence of capable leadership, supportive administration, empowered faculty, and willingness to enable their students to make the shift from storing and reproducing information to using it more appropriately in and outside of school.

Effective, Open Communication

Studies of management patterns, as early as the 1960s of the last century, at least, have shown that in interpersonal relationships 'openness' is related to subordinate work satisfaction and that greater openness of communication by one or both participants of the relationship was associated with increased satisfaction. Furthermore,

it was substantiated that openness of one member of a pair was significantly related to openness of the other members (Burke and Wilcox 1969). Despite the importance of accurate information that is necessary for smooth, effective communication, research examining upward communication in organizational hierarchies suggests that there are three interpersonal factors that could be consistently related to aspects of communication. These are subordinate's trust in his/her superior, subordinate's perception of his superior's influence over his/her future, and subordinate's mobility aspirations (Roberts and O'Reilly 1974). Although some of the research undertaken on the issue of organizational management and communication has questioned whether clarity in communication results in organizational effectiveness on the grounds that people of an organization develop multiple and open conflicting goals, deal with multiple situational requirements and utilize multiple communicative strategies that do not necessarily minimize ambiguity, but are nonetheless effective. Eisenberg (1984) calls this "strategic ambiguity" which is essential to organizational work in that it promotes unified diversity, makes easier organizational change, and maximizes existing source attributions and maintains privileged positions.

However, emphasizing open communication among all school administrators, teachers, students, and all other assistants and workers is an essential part of the school strategy which lays emphasis on establishing a safe, secure, and friendly work environment, one that is conducive to quality learning and team collaboration aiming at achieving school goals and nurturing personal and collective growth. Basically, school environment refers to all physical and psychosocial aspects that can positively or negatively influence school performance. Physical characteristics such as the school building, lighting, furniture, availability of equipment and technological labs are all necessary for achieving a higher quality of learning. Equally, and probably more importantly, however, are the interpersonal relationships, recognition of individual needs, and mutual trust and respect governing superior–subordinate communication at school. According to Buffie (cited in Halawah 2005), open communication and the school principal's role in creating a collaborative learning environment constitute the single-most important determinant of success in school improvement initiatives.

For open communication to take place among all school players, a careful inspection has to be made of the subtleties of personal, interpersonal, and organizational relationships at school. Michell (2001) analyzed the factors which influence these three areas and which impact on staff communication, on capacity building and in turn on the professional effectiveness of school staff. At the personal level, one's assumptions, beliefs, and values come into confrontation with the existing structure of professional development. It is a necessary confrontation as it can test the narrative of professional growth, its validity, and effectiveness and the degree to which it needs reconstruction.

At the interpersonal level, there is a shift of focus from the individual to the group. By valuing the contributions of colleagues and inviting them to participate, an affective climate, upon which collegial cognitive climate is to be built, is established, so supporting and encouraging individual and collective learning. Furthermore, the

building of interpersonal capacity also implies a well-functioning team of co-workers and colleagues working and learning together. Finally, at the organizational level, existing traditional structures are typically characterized by dominance and control exercised by superiors in decision making coupled with uniform expectations, procedures and standards. "These conditions have served to isolate teachers and students, to minimize contact among educators, to reduce flexibility and professional discretion, and to engender defensiveness and resistance among the professional staff and among students)" (Michell 2001). One way to resolve this conflict, Michell suggests, is through structural arrangements that bring individual educators into close professional contact and give them the opportunity to talk openly about how they perceive the learning conditions in their schools. Again, since the typical administrator–teacher relationship tends to be one of control rather than collaboration, leading to defensiveness and self-protection rather than support and cooperation, different individuals should be allowed to assume leadership roles as appropriate to differing situations and priorities. This makes an important contribution to reducing vertical hierarchical levels and dispersing power throughout the school, so creating a better learning community at school.

It is to be strongly stressed that effective, open communication in school relationships entails clarity, transparency, accountability, and a high level of proficiency and professional capabilities, especially at higher leadership and management levels. Individuals' right to know, inquire, and seek assistance and support should be guaranteed by professional appraisals of all school members marked by agreed standards, transparent procedures and reliable authentic assessment strategies. With sufficient open communication in which all school partners are able to carry out their work successfully and with satisfaction, the school becomes a rewarding and exciting work environment. As Grosman's says (cited in Mitchell and Sackney 2001) "schools cannot become exciting places for children until they first become exciting places for adults."

Conclusion

Establishing a culture of learning in our schools commences with careful scrutiny of our current educational policies and practices, questioning our assumptions about the role schools should play in the education of our children. At present in Egypt, as elsewhere in the world, we need to be more acutely aware of the lack of genuine learning opportunities stifled by a set curriculum and accompanying assumptions about "effective teaching." If schools are to furnish a rich learning environment and are able to free students from compliance and passive reproduction of received "wisdom," they will requite a quality of leadership, forward thinking, and risk taking. Willingness to identify growth-enhancing goals, to gear them to satisfying students' and school members' needs for real learning rests on effective and imaginative school policies, plans, and support for classroom practices and which are founded on a pro-learning culture in our schools.

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Chapter 56
Educational Leadership with Eyes and Hearts Wide Open

Grzegorz Mazurkiewicz

Democratic Leadership, Democratic Schools and Democratic Society

Democratic school requires democratic leadership. Democratic society requires democratic schools and schools require democratic structures and processes. Education is a group and social investment, not simply a personal acquisition of a right to work or to obtain a degree with the promise of higher wages. Education and the educational system are the elements in the public domain which are familiar, apprehended intuitively and through experience but when subject to deeper reflection, prove to be ambiguous and ill-defined. This is where leadership assumes importance.

Educational leadership requires a critical reappraisal of the values and purposes of the school, and the hierarchy within which they play out. They initiate and sustain the constructive dialogue, the negotiation of meaning and deliberations around the organisational culture of the school. Without talk about what is important there can be no school in any meaningful sense and without an open communication process the educational process cannot flourish.

We very often find institutions in the social world which have lost the opportunity to fulfil their functions because they were designed and built for a completely different reality. In order to survive and serve their purpose, schools like all institutions have to change. As change proves difficult, we typically witness situations where outmoded structures are unable to adapt to new conditions. Indeed the entire educational system, which may have been fit for purpose at the beginning of the twentieth century, in the industrial era, is much less able to meet the demands of a contemporary fluid reality (Bauman 2006).

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A critical look at the organisation of the school work reveals the factors most influential in the functioning of today's societies and the powerful processes shaping the social world appear to bear little influence on the functioning of the school. Yet, despite being so often disappointed, we still believe in the promise of universal education and we inevitably turn to the school system to fulfil that promise. We expect that our attempts at coping with life are supported. We expect to become equipped with appropriate competences. We expect to be given directions and shown paths of development. In changing social and economic circumstances, coping with and responding positively to change in the purposes and functions of schooling becomes a leadership imperative.

It is leadership, that helps us to understand the nature of tasks which the modern world sets for the school and it is those in positions of leadership who work to create practical strategies and seek solutions. The prerequisite is to take account of emerging needs, to assess the nature of existing resources and explore the spectrum of possible consequences. The leadership task for head teachers and teachers is to take decisions about the future and not find themselves constrained to replicate structures and procedures that belong to the past.

What has been referred to as the 'school crisis' (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991) occurs when social and historical awareness are missing, when essential democratic values are misplaced and inequality and injustice are ignored. The crisis will not be met simply by adjusting curricula content or by changing organisational structures. The problem is not one of lack of information or communication. In fact the young have access to a wealth of information. Nor is there a dearth of channels of communication. The problem lies in failing to wake up to the profound impact of social change. Leadership is concerned with action, not simply directed to curricula, or to teachers, with an inward focus on the school but which also involve entire communities with which schools can, and need to, collaborate with (Mazurkiewicz 2009, p. 30). The focus of leadership is on initiatives which address situations which lack a coherent and forward-looking vision of education and which perceive the deep connections between the educational and social spheres.

The world is changing. The world population is still growing, moving and ageing. Living conditions force tens of millions of people change their place of residence. We are witnessing the growing size and complexity of organisations, increasingly sophisticated communication technologies, globalisation, changes in the nature of work professionalisation, stagnation and economic crises, unstable markets and ecological problems (Alvesson and Deetz 2005). These changes determine how we live our lives and what we learn to value. We should get to know change better, to make friends with it and be able to use it in ways that promote the common good. There are few places and few situations in which we can afford to ignore the nature and impact of change. And if we learn to understand it, change does not have to mean living under constant threat. Equipped with deeper understanding, schools can learn not simply how to live with and accommodate to change but how to oppose and counteract the powerful forces which drive schools in the wrong direction. Creating and enhancing understanding of what hinders individual and social development and the development of the organisation is a duty of leadership.

Thinking about the common good means thinking about who and where we are, who and where our teachers and students are, enhancing their ability to see and understand the context in which the school functions. Leading learning requires the skills of a politician who understands to what extent all the elements of the system are coupled with one another and how that synergy can be used, together with a keen appreciation of the ecological balance of that system.

Questions of Context

It is, though, not enough to understand the context in which the school functions. Leadership implies actively shaping that context. Responsible accountable leadership does not respond reflexively to the mandates and expectations of various authorities but is proactive, engaged in a continuous process of reflection, dialogue and self-assessment, conducted systematically and openly. A previous mission of the educational system was to ensure basic-level education to the largest possible group and higher education to the elite (Fullan et al. 2006); today, all students are required to achieve the level which enables them to study at a higher level and be equipped for lifelong learning. That purpose is most likely to be achieved if school leaders enable teachers, pupils and parents to participate in a dialogue about the present and the future, at the heart of which is a respect for high ethical norms (Hausner 2008, p. 27).

While planning for change, however small or however ambitious education undertakings, care has to be exercised, mindful of recent experience in which schools have been testing grounds for various, often unsustainable, proposals for school improvement. For too long and too often, schools have been victims of education authorities who have imposed initiatives which are often unrelated to one another and are mandated without due regard for the context in which these initiatives are expected to be 'delivered'. That should not, however, deter us from exploring new models of school improvement and new forms of educational leadership, leading to a process of redesign which considers the educational experience as a whole and which has learned the lessons from episodic and fragmentary change, often superficial and of no intrinsic or lasting value (Fullan 2001, p. 21). An appropriate balance needs to be sought between innovation and coherent consistent work in our chosen direction without which schools are ill-equipped to make the kind of choices which change lives. Without visionary leadership they lack professional staff able to analyse and select and choose wisely among differing options.

To be able to choose and be selective is critical as implementation of all available innovations and novelties is as harmful as remaining in with the status quo. For the creation of a mature system of school improvement and leadership with learning at its heart – being effective and capable of "self-correction" – some vital conditions need to be observed:

• Conceptualisation of desired changes which is suitable and appropriate to contemporary conditions and which may happen only when there exists a language

in which we are able to communicate and when there is a true, professional discourse.

- Institutional structure enabling the educational professionals to function and to grow and to profit from partnerships with higher education institutions, centres, research institutions and other organisations which help to create space for discourse, dialogue or even experimentation.
- Technical capabilities to generate, compare, assess and archive ideas and designs so that valuable initiatives do not relate to individual events but support the creation of a sustainable development system.
- Abilities to act under pressure and take responsibility for one's own actions (including mistakes); ability to flexibly respond to external needs and at the same time to create new solutions in a responsible and innovative manner (Ciolan 2006).

Addressing these issues presumes an ability to cooperate in various fields of social life and to be able to do so with regard to cultural and economic diversity and in conditions of constant mobility and change. Demographic processes make that demand difficult but at the same time even more vital to achieve.

It is clear that schools have to be different – the age of commands and bureaucracy is over. We no longer need precise instructions and procedures as a main tools in teaching and learning but rather a deep understanding of human nature and human learning, motivation and changing needs. Underpinning and driving action should be those humanistic and democratic values which open the door to fruitful collaboration. The survival of our world, and our educational system, rests on whether we are able to learn together, to live in peace and coexistence in a situation which requires no policing, no external authority to keep order in a queue where everyone has to fight for the best position oblivious to differing abilities and needs.

In order to realise this, educational leaders have to manifest in their behaviour, in their relationships and in their communications the values, attitudes and abilities without which that complex goal could not possibly be fulfilled. In other words, a school cannot be led by a individual, or group, which is not aware of the broader policy context and the more immediate community context in which it functions. Every decision made should arise from a conviction that what we do serves not only a given institution but all those with whom it works at multiple levels. A school head teacher has to genuinely believe that the main aim of his or her work is not to attain a higher position in the school ranking tables but to serve the society and to work for the local, regional and global community.

Managing Change

To function effectively and attempt to 'manage' change is in any organisation is an uncertain, and sometimes dangerous, business, especially when this may appear to threaten the consumerist approach to life and learning (Bauman 2004). Bottery (2004)

has pointed to the dangers that threaten civil society, increasingly driven by the ideology of having and buying – consumption taken to absurd levels which school systems do not only oppose but actually collude with. The belief that shopping instead of political and public involvement will make us free individuals is a false prophet. Rather than freeing us consumption binds us closer to dependency and offers an escape from civic duties.

Of course we do not know how to 'manage' change and there is no blueprint for how to change the realities of schooling and the mindsets which it engenders. That, however, does not release us from the obligation to attempt to reconstruct the models and process of managing and leading a school. The scale of the challenge does not justify inactivity or lack of reflection. It does not mean a tired resignation to today's morals and social mores. Leadership in education is both a field of science, outcomes, correlations and inference of causes. There is also a strong element of intuition and 'reading the organisation'. Developing an effective and reflective practice, sensitive to context and social attitudes, demands consistency and patience. The laborious process of realising the ideal leadership model requires decisions and actions exercised at various levels of significance and over an extended period of time. But all efforts of effective leadership should concentrate on one – providing teachers with the best possible conditions for teaching (Fazzaro et al. 1994, pp. 85–95) and for developing their own knowledge and craft. Irrespective of the situation worldwide, the state of the economy or the level of discussion about education, educational leaders have to ensure that teachers have an opportunity to teach in such a way that students have a real chance to learn.

This is not the job of the lone heroic head teacher, however. One of the main priorities of leadership is to increase participation in the decision-making process and to strengthen the sense of responsibility among all members of staff for the conditions and process of teaching. Leaders play a major role in setting and confirming the values on which teaching, learning and organisational health rest, but it is through the actions and ownership of individuals and groups that those values are realised in the day-to-day work of classrooms.

Analysis of key documents emerging from the European Union reveals a strong conviction that it is high quality systems of professional development which will produce both effectiveness and equality. This is a high priority agenda for the success of the Polish system along with partner countries in Europe. There is a common concern across these nations that high quality of teaching, appropriate education of teachers and consistent professional development are needed to raise educational achievement and to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession. It is also seen as important for senior leaders to hand over the decision-making process to teachers and head teachers but, crucially, to support them in acquiring skills appropriate to the needs of their particular school and to invest in their professionalism so that they are able to consciously and competently implement necessary changes. That will always depend on several factors: access to information, ongoing professional development, teacher's involvement in decision making, pressure and support from a local community and funding and resourcing at a sustainable level.

Mental Software

Deliberating on this ambitious agenda and the big questions it raises we cannot avoid the invidious theory practice divide. All too commonly a theoretical perspective is notably absent from the discourse, from actions taken and reflection on those actions. So whenever it comes to any attempt to implement systemic change, or more profound reform or any kind, that confusion – ideological and axiological – obtains. It may be argued that how the reality of school and school improvement are understood has its origins in the positivist approach and functionalism which views the system through a structural and functionality lens. There appears to be no place for addressing injustice, yet society functioning as a single organism cannot afford to neglect any 'organ' and thus, what is good for the society is good for any individual. While schools fulfil their duty as best they can do to prepare citizens of the future this is face of success defined as gaining the socially desirable prizes of social advancement, wealth, admiration and respect (Feinberg and Soltis 1998).

Injustice is not the most signal preoccupation of the school because the division of power, allocation of resources or the nature of existing social structures is not open to question. Schools and classrooms are not revolutionary hotbeds of subversive activity because the main task of management is to manage. Observing the rules, preparation of the workforce, dealing with social and life problems are all conducted at an academic remove, as maintaining the social order is what management is essentially about. Leadership is more inclined to disturb the status quo.

While I am presenting an argument for defining a new understanding of leadership and management in education, my conviction, as an adherent of critical theory, is that reality is constructed socially. What we see and how we understand what we see depends on the importance which we have attached to the observed phenomena and to our own actions. If we make such an assumption we need to realise that in such an understanding of the world, the source of all injustice is we ourselves because we construct the world in our own image and in the perceptions which we bring to constructed categories such as class, sex or race. The real aim of the school should be to rebuild the world of understanding, redefining the categories and mental prisms, or prisons, through which we engage with reality.

Four Paradigms

Avery (2009) suggests four main paradigms of leadership: classical, transactional, visionary and organic. Each of these generates its own theoretical positions and frames in what we see and what we expect from our institutions and our institutional leaders.

Classical leadership posits the domination of one eminent person or an elite group of persons giving orders to others or, perhaps, manipulating others. The aim of the group's actions is specified but not necessarily proclaimed openly – the

members of an organisation simply follow directives given by the leaders, generally without question, either because of fear of consequences or respect for the leader. That style of work – giving orders and controlling people – was a prevailing leadership style in the organisations of the twentieth century and is very popular to this day (Avery 2009), although with differing degrees in differing cultural milieux (Hofstede and Hofstede 2000).

Transactional leadership is the dominant model when leaders perceive the members of the group as individuals and devote attention to their skills, needs and motives. The conviction that the leader consciously uses his/her influence in order to steer, organise and support the actions and relationships in the group underlies this form of leadership. The leaders and members of the group negotiate, that is, they carry out transactions whose results depend to a great measure on the ability of the leader to influence others in order to achieve specific goals and his/her skill in rewarding or punishing the members of the group (Avery 2009). The transactional approach to leadership treats an organisation as a closed system where the tasks or product of an organisation is easy to define and precise scales enable the productivity and quality of interpersonal relations to be measured easily (Tuohy 2002).

Visionary leadership comes into its own in times of change and uncertainty. Such leaders appeal to the hearts and minds of the members of an organisation. They present a bright vision of the future, develop a plan for achieving aims set by the organisation and motivate the members of the organisation to realise that vision. Visionaries are not heroes but rather 'products' of their times; when times change, visionary leadership may lose its power and its skills and visions no longer suit emerging needs. Subordinates of visionary leaders are expected to be active and to involve in the group's actions taken with a view to implementing the vision. Numerous consultations make it possible for the tasks and problems to be looked at from different points of view, which increase the chance for a right strategy to be chosen. One of the important myths exploded on the basis of research is the conviction that visionary organisations constitute a workplace for everyone, yet in fact it can only be for those people who identify with it and for whom the basic philosophy of an organisation is congenial (Avery 2009).

The transformational leader equips people with power so that they are able to find a new sense and new purpose of their actions in and by themselves. Using that power, they go beyond traditional ways of functioning and achieve extraordinary results. It is the follower who undergoes transformation and goes through a metamorphosis which releases his or her potential and leadership abilities so the others will naturally follow. The transactional approach to leadership emphasises the differences between the leader and his followers, the transformational approach tries to blur those differences and tries to build community (Tuohy 2002).

A further categorisation is organic leadership, to be found in networked organisations, in which the concept of a single, central leader is redundant. Such organisations function in a multicultural, diverse world which can be presented (as can be the organisation) not as a hierarchical system but as a group of dynamic hubs. Cross-functional working groups are an everyday phenomenon in contemporary

organisations and their members can change depending on current needs and participate in many differing groups at a time. Groups which are capable of self-management and self-improvement do not need permanent, formal leadership – that role may always be adopted by someone else who might be the most appropriate for particular time, task and context. Those changes in organisations require a change in the concept of leadership as well. New forms are needed which take into account the increasing dispersion of employees and the complexity of connections among them. Leadership then has to be exercised through the vision and values that permeate the entire culture (Avery 2009, pp. 39–49). It may be noticed that, paradoxically, modern practice is employed by some terrorist organisations for which the sense of mission, clear vision and strong system of values are more important than everyday meetings and task setting.

Who Wants to Be a Head Teacher?

There is an increasing amount of evidence of growing frustration among people managing schools and a decreasing number of those willing to perform that job and fulfil that function. Fullan (1997), Williams (2001), MacBeath (2006), MacBeath et al. (2009) show in their research how schools in the USA, Great Britain, Canada and Australia contend with problems resulting from a recruitment crisis, a shortfall of highly qualified and competent principals/head teachers and declining enthusiasm for holding management positions. This is true in Poland, most often resulting from stress caused by lack of time for planning changes required by authorities. As reported in many other countries, this is exacerbated by wide-ranging changes in curricula, too few opportunities to work with students, inadequate support from other school employees and too much time needed to carry out tasks imposed on school-heads but without providing needed financial resources for those purposes on heads having with few financial resources (Bottery 2004, p. 13). Heads work hard, in very difficult conditions and are often underrated and underpaid. They feel exploited, unjustly criticised, tired and threatened by authorities' attitude (Fullan 2003). External quality assurance, or measurement, too often is a bureaucratic and formulaic creation which may simply serve to incapacitate school staff. Leaders often feel cut adrift, ploughing a lonely furrow, in need of help but reluctant to admit to that too openly in a context which demands 'strong' leadership.

A good school cannot be built from behind a ministerial desk. That task needs to fall to educational leaders with confidence and skill to shake, and to shape, ways of thinking and being in the education world (Mazurkiewicz 2008). There is long-standing literature on 'leadership traits'. They have been seen as useful in preparation and professional development of school leaders but we have to be constantly reminded that leadership is served in a group. That function does not exist without a group. It can be truly understood only in a relational context, in a concrete play between people, with people around the school, in the culture of school and community and in the wider society.

The process is always a dynamic one and is always seeking to understand the process through which influence is exercised, by the impact of some people on others and how groups move towards achieving common purposes and objectives (Northouse 2007, p. 3).

I suggest the educational leader, whatever their position or status, should be defined as someone who, above all, has the power to reveal the potential of others. That is possible because they possess the self-knowledge and capacity for reflection and display an awareness of their role and their priorities which are to create and sustain a school which learns. For them learning to understand the world is something more than a cognitive process. It is a cultural and emotional process (Fink 2005) and it is manifested in combination of a multitude of ways of being with others and influencing others. This does not mean a simplistic primitive steering of their behaviours but rather through a deep, personal contact. Leadership is the ability to release others' abilities to perform tasks as well as possible and at the same time with the sense of reasonableness, dignity and respect for others (Blanchard 2007).

It is worth stressing that traditional (classical) leadership has become almost untenable in contemporary organisations which increasingly tend to operate more as networks. People who play the role of leaders in those organisations act rather as coordinators who support communication and cooperation of a group, fuel involvement and function as catalysts for changes, coaches, teachers or integrators (Avery 2009, p. 48). As educational leadership is necessarily about the sharing of power, the ability to build a team whose members cooperate and are orientated towards the achieving of common goals (Reinhartz and Beach 2004) is generated from the inside, by the team itself. In these circumstances, leaders do not come with a vision of change, leading the procession but helping others to believe in themselves, to see and use their own potential and jointly to develop a vision and strategy for action. It also implies offering support and conviction in dealing with the uncertainty which is so often linked to the gaining of autonomy and independence.

Leadership is not leading a group while following landmarks with a map in your hand but it is rather a journey with many diversions, turnings back, asking for directions and being prepared for constant changing of direction, pace and means of transportation. Educational leaders recognise and anticipate problems and understand the volatile and sometimes precarious nature of the learning journey. Those who lead are in the very middle, rather than at the apex, of initiatives and projects carried out by their colleagues and are active participants in them in order to continue to learn.

The priority of educational leaders will always be to support students in their learning and teachers in their teaching. He or she cannot 'teach for them'. He or she cannot, or should not, plan lessons or prepare teaching aids. What must be known is what it means to be a leader of the educational process. He/she must know how people learn, where and when they learn best and what drives and enhances that learning. Being a leader means above all making people aware of what they want to do and not what they should do.

Attempts to understand the leadership are often compounded by myths, many of which make it difficult for educational leaders to stand back, to retreat and take a 'serving' attitude towards their colleagues. This is not easy when thinking is still dominated by legends of leaders and heroes who weather adversities on their own. Nevertheless, we have to concentrate our efforts as soon as possible so that the following priorities in educational leaders' actions could be reinforced:

- Continuing reflection on the reality, discussion of the context, analysis of the conditions the leaders function in, study of the needs and expectations so as to properly adapt the objectives, priorities, tasks and actions for the good of the individual, group and other stakeholders.
- Adopting an appropriate attitude of service towards colleagues, making it possible to support them in the performance of their tasks and making them aware of their own potential, scope of power and responsibility so that they are able to participate in the process of taking decisions and be equipped for co-leadership.
- Creating the norms and manner in which the organisation functions, for example, by asking questions, suggesting tasks and problems to be solved so that colleagues learn from one another and, in that way, making it possible for the organisation to learn and grow.

More important than the curriculum and the educational techniques used, indeed the entire 'technology' of teaching, is the belief in what it is worth learning and what it is possible. There is an erroneous belief that in order to advance to the state of the society's knowledge we need to teach more and cram more into an already overloaded curriculum. However, too much teaching, too much curriculum content, too many tests and exams and the whole panoply of current organisational requirements tend to hinder than to support the process of learning. While improving the quality and efficacy of the school we have to start with those three simple issues: safety, motivation and identity.

While building a sense of safety it must be remembered that this is dependent on how teachers perceive their students. There is a prevalent belief that students are substandard semi-finished products, defective individuals who come to school so that the school can 'fix' them. Janusz Korczak (1996, p. 101) wrote about a kind of impairment which children experience because they are treated as irresponsible. The fundamental task of adults should be to help a student feel that he or she is an autonomous individual. The fundamental task of adults is to support him/her in perceiving self as a partner of, and for, others. This cannot happen if students are treated as objects on which operations are carried out, filling the gaps in their knowledge. Every human being in order to feel safe has to have the sense of control over what happens to them, to feel that others respect his or her opinions and take them genuinely into account.

The sense of safety derives from open relations between people, mutual respect and lack of fear of constantly being judged or deemed a failure. The school has to build the culture of cooperation, appreciation and reciprocity, to attenuate the culture of competition. Every new educational cycle, every course, every subject, every class must assure students anew that their main task is not so much to

constantly prove their own value but to learn to behave self-assuredly, think critically, analyse rationally, solve problems and cooperate with others. Teachers for their part, evidence in their actions that they do not value children according to the division into the able and the slow. It means subverting that complex selection process which starts at the very beginning of the educational journey and is reinforced in every situation where students are compared, assessed and required to constantly prove their own worth. And although competition has always been and will be the natural element of social life, what the contemporary school imposes on students does not lend itself to sustainable growth.

How to build an atmosphere of safety in the school? Above all, relationships between teachers and students have to be fostered in situations where adults are genuinely interested in the young and show real concern for their development. Of course, teachers also need to feel safe. They have to be sure that they have the consent and support of the authorities to create growth-enhancing relationships in the first place, to engage in a dialogue with students on what they find important, what they are afraid of and what they pin their hopes on. Conversations about students' expectations make it possible for the most important values and principles to be communicated and the learning community to be built. When we are afraid of our own safety we rarely establish genuine and open relationships with others. When teachers do not know their students they do not have any opportunities to create authentic teaching situations which draw on students' own experiences and respond to their needs. What we teach is sometimes less important than how we teach whether it is of importance to students and whether they will be able to make use of it some day. With strong and confident teacher–student relationships, it becomes possible to raise contentious, sometimes controversial and inconvenient issues and build courage in students to broach subjects which depart from the urgency and immediacy of the curriculum.

Educational leaders operate in a culture of fear, argues Palmer (1998), whereas democracy is based above all on trust in others and on the belief that the persons who take decisions on our behalf do so on the basis of sensible opinions and judgements (Meier 2000). When that trust is missing the democratic system starts to fall apart. The same applies to the school. It is absolutely essential to build trust and the sense of safety already in schools. That is the first condition for genuine teaching.

The second crucial element of teaching for empowered learning is motivation. In his widely discussed theory, Kohn (1998) argues that schools need to stop rewarding and punishing students on the basis of attainment measures. Grades, certificates of distinction, school reports and prizes get the students into the habit of acting only in the situation where there is the mechanism of reward or sanction. Motivation then disappears when children stop studying because they no longer receive As for successes or because they are not admonished for lack of progress. People are curious about the world by nature, they are born ready to learn – that is our vocation without which our species would not exist. The school's task is to develop that natural instinct instead of suppressing it. The aim of educating should be to shape intelligence and the ability to think, something which can only be achieved with appropriate motivation.

What teachers need to be able to do, first and foremost is to increase students' motivation to learn is to encourage them to think about their own school experience. They have, themselves, to answer the question: what do they go to school for? Building the habit of critical thinking reinforces their motivation to learn. School education is not only a powerful machinery which is kept and managed with great financial and organisational efforts by people hired by the system, but it is also about the social experiences of millions of young people who come to school with their own hopes and dreams. They sometimes agree to cooperate; they sometimes choose a form of resistance (Shor 1992). If we fail to convince students that it is worth making an effort in the interest of their own development, they will only leave school with a bag of tricks whose main purpose is to outwit their examiners.

However, the dialogue on the importance of the learning for yourself cannot take place when teachers themselves do not have the courage to emphasise what is important in learning and teaching and to exemplify it with their students. In order to inspire students, teachers have to first learn to reflect on their own actions. Teachers too have to be ready to ask difficult questions and be open to inconvenient answers. Willingness to learn is seen with the people who firmly believe in what they do and are confident that they have knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to do that. Self-confidence enables teachers to support the autonomy and freedom of students. Only with such confidence is it possible for power to be shared. That implies that teachers who 'have not done their homework' and are not open to learning and to challenge do not have a moral right to teach, so undermining their pedagogic authority (Freire 2001, p. 85). The task of educational leaders is to create the conditions that make moral and pedagogical authority a reality.

Effectiveness of that process is greater when the third condition is met, that is when students understand the constraints and possibilities of the context in which they find themselves. This is something that I call the awareness of identity. The educational process too often proceeds as if all of its participants were the same; individual needs of students, their history and experiences are not taken into account and their future plans are not considered. The school must make it possible for students to reflect on who they are and what they expect from themselves, from the school and from the world beyond. These moments of reflection enable students to understand the nature of their own situation and gain a deeper full awareness of what they need to learn and whom they are learning for.

A sense of identity is what allows the nature of authority to come into the open and be recognised for what it is. When we know who we are and when we know what we look for, it becomes easier to understand which lodestar is worth following. The world of today has not disposed of authorities nor has it made them redundant. It has, however, created a plethora of authorities, none of whom can count on exclusiveness. According to Zygmunt Bauman (2006), when authorities embody contradictory values and advocate different forms of conduct and differing interpretations of reality it leads to confusion and disorder and inhibits the development process. Traditional approaches, relying on the command and control, no longer carry sole authority nor can simply expect compliance. In order to be able to act as partners, students must know who they are, what they want and whom they serve or decline

to serve. This relies on an ability to take autonomous decisions and to know when and where those apply. Teachers need to teach them to do that in a school milieu where it is safe to experiment and to carry out real, 'mature' tasks without the risk of losing status, respect or the ability to excel.

Safety, motivation and identity are three fundamental concepts, the absence of which in schools sets back student motivation, clouds identity and undermines achievement. Who is to blame for that? It is very easy to criticise teachers and demand changes. Teachers are an easy target for any criticism which, however, leads nowhere. Rather, a discussion should be initiated on what to do and where to go with our schools. Vaclav Havel believes that the only hope for our world are we ourselves and that we can make a change only by using our ability to reflect and our sense of responsibility – a worldwide revolution in people's minds. The school may prove to be one of the few institutions which is in a position to change mind-sets. If we succeed in leading the process of change, students may become genuine accomplices in that enterprise, for their own school education, for their community and for the wider world community. Students exercising responsibility take responsibility for themselves, for what they do, how they study and share responsibility with and for other people, friends, neighbours and fellow citizens and for the community they live in. It has to be borne in mind that every valuable action starts the moment we grasp the necessity for it and our individual responsibility for its consequences. By performing that task in the school, we reinforce the natural desire in the young for a sense of agency and a desire to effect positive change in the world they live in. The responsibility for oneself and the world is both an outcome of education but also a prerequisite for education. We know our teaching will be effective when our students become responsible for their actions and are willing to shape the reality which surrounds them.

Education is about opening your eyes and seeing for yourself the world as it really is in all its complexity and then finding, or being helped to find, the tools which provide the leverage, plus the strength to participate fully and to change what you find (Ayers 2004). Education is the process of releasing your potential, imagination, joy and captive energy. It is a process of empowering people but will never be justifiable if it involves only a sector of society. If we assert that teaching ensures safety, encourages full participation and nurtures a sense of identity and, further, that learning is a process of taking responsibility, then we also have to agree that it should involve everyone. A responsible school helps all students to overcome natural obstacles in a journey in which they strive to discover who they are and what they can achieve. Educational leaders have a duty to make their colleagues aware of that principle.

Summary

Developing active learning presents a serious challenge for schools, or indeed for other institutions if indeed viable alternatives to schools exist. How to learn together, how to support one another, how to listen, and how to solve problems run

against the grain of conventions and traditions of schooling. Schools have a duty to provide their students not with simple answers to complex issues but to help them engage with the complexity of the world, not from an academic distance and through the medium of handbooks, prescribed texts and inert ideas, but in the here and now. Education, teaching and development are dynamic processes that occur in people and through people, in interactions with others and with the environment. Education is eminently practical, enriching practice with theoretical reflection, manifested in action and first-hand experience.

Those in positions of leadership set the example, co-create and support the system of values, define the purposes, priorities and conduct the educational enterprise. They create the conditions for teachers to teach and for children to learn. They promote cooperation with the local community, work with others to build the organisational culture of a school that becomes and remains a genuine learning community. They perceive changes as an opportunity and not as a threat and above all act to create their own destiny rather than waiting for its verdict to be pronounced (Mazurkiewicz 2008).

It is not known why we witness such strong tendencies to reject responsibility for what we do and it is not known why we often give up possibilities of 'taking things into our own hands' and why we so often agree to implement something with which we do not agree. Freire wrote, 'I am happy that I am the man because even if I know that material, social, political, cultural and ideological conditions under which we live create divisions that prevent us from fulfilling our dreams and transforming the reality, I know also that all the obstacles are not permanent' (2001, p. 55).

Such a standpoint requires courage but when we take an active part in shaping our own environment, we show that we care about it. We also demonstrate respect for the environment and for the people who live in it. Such respect rests on a belief that each of us is an autonomous individual as well as a social agent. The school must be a place which shows respect for all its learners – both adults and children. If we respect one another, by giving ourselves the right to actively participate in life and transformations in the school, we will respect our students in a natural way. These two kinds of respect are inseparable. They are where learning and leadership meet.

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Chapter 57
Leading Assessment for Learning

Sue Swaffield

Introduction

Leading Assessment for Learning (AfL) is concerned with the influence on assessment thinking and practice at a number of levels, by a variety of people and groups, and in the context of the four countries which make up the United Kingdom.

At the macro level leadership is primarily through national policy, guidelines and development programmes shaped and activated by whichever political party is in power at the time. Leadership at regional and local level is typically through local authorities mediating central government policy and sometimes initiating their own, as well as through national independent organisations organised regionally, for example the Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment (AAIA; www.aaia.org.uk). Many local authority advisers with responsibility for assessment are members of AAIA, and so have opportunities to exert their influence at the regional and national levels as well as operating locally. Local authorities and schools are sometimes involved in researching and developing AfL through projects with academics in universities: examples include 'Teaching Assessment at Key Stage 1' (Torrance and Pryor 1998), the 'King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project' (Black et al. 2003), the 'Learning How to Learn' project (James et al. 2007), and the 'Portsmouth Learning Community AfL' project (Blanchard 2009). One group of academics, the Assessment Reform Group (ARG; www.assessment-reform-group.org) has been extremely influential in assessment policy and practice throughout the UK in the 20 years since its formation. Some universities offer accredited courses, for example the University of Cambridge has run a post-graduate certificate in Leading Assessment for Learning for the past 10 years, and a few but growing number have masters' courses in assessment that include Assessment for Learning. Individuals such as Ruth Sutton and Shirley Clarke have had a powerful effect on teachers' practice through working with them

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directly, through their influence locally and nationally, and through their publications (for example Sutton 1992; Clarke 2008).

However, not withstanding all these contributions, the leadership that makes the most direct difference to pupil learning is that of teachers. Sometimes it is a lone enthusiast influenced perhaps by a course or a book; sometimes a group of teachers is involved in research and development projects, and sometimes a team of teachers and school leaders work collaboratively with practitioners from other schools. All teachers though, whether wittingly or not, convey messages to their pupils about the relationship between assessment and learning, and about the nature of each. As in any sphere leadership of AfL can, and often does, have unintended consequences as well as or instead of planned effects, not all of which are positive.

This chapter addresses issues of leading AfL, using the four constituent nations of the UK as the context for discussion. The following section is an introduction to AfL providing historical context, definition, principles, key practices and essential features, as well as the underlying conceptions of learning and assessment. Next the differing histories and paths of development of AfL in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are considered. Similarities and differences are drawn, and the leadership of AfL in the four countries is compared. The particular leadership roles and actions of students, teachers, school and local authority leaders are considered, before a 'Leadership for Learning' (LfL) framework is used to analyse the leadership of AfL in the UK.

Assessment for Learning

The proliferation of interest in AfL over the last decade is often attributed to a review of research by Black and Wiliam (1998a), but the history of AfL, or 'formative assessment' a term frequently used as a synonym, is much longer. The notion of the present informing the future (the core of formative assessment) must surely go back to the very beginnings of human activity, but a specifically educational application was noted as long ago as 1864. Harry Black (1986) refers to a letter written by the principal of the Greenwich Hospital School bemoaning the lack of literature and development focused on formative assessment procedures. A century later though this lack of literature was still the norm and Harry Black was unusual in promoting and developing formative assessment with teachers. At the same time as Harry Black was working in Scotland, the Records of Achievement movement (DES/WO 1984; Munby et al. 1989) was reaching its height in England. Records of Achievement in practice may have over emphasised the record as the product, but the process included sharing curriculum intentions with students, self-assessment, recognising a breadth of achievement, dialogue with students, and ongoing assessment – all recognisable as features of AfL. Also at this time the Task Group on Testing and Assessment (DES/WO 1988) proposed that formative assessment should feature in the national assessment arrangements associated with the new national curriculum in England and Wales, although as Daugherty (1995) notes this was not put into practice.

The significance of Black and Wiliam's 1998 review was in providing evidence that formative assessment practices produce substantial learning gains. In addition, it reported on the state of teachers' practice, studied student involvement in formative assessment, suggested strategies for teachers and looked in detail at feedback. Taken together the quantification of potential effect, the exposure of contemporary weaknesses and the identification of pointers to improved practice made this a piece of research one that appealed to existing proponents of AfL as well as to policy makers seeking ways of raising standards. As AfL gained impetus and spread, so knowledge and understanding about its complexities and subtleties grew.

Based on research, AfL has been defined as 'the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there' (ARG 2002a, pp. 2–3). The Assessment Reform Group (the group of UK academics who had commissioned the Black and Wiliam review) also produced a set of principles to guide practice:

- AfL should be part of effective planning of teaching and assessment
- AfL should focus on how students learn
- AfL should be recognised as central to classroom practice
- AfL should be regarded as a key professional skill for teachers
- AfL should be sensitive and constructive because any assessment has an emotional impact
- AfL should take account of the importance of learner motivation
- AfL should promote commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed
- Learners should receive constructive guidance about how to improve
- AfL develops learners capacity for self-assessment so they can become reflective and self-managing
- AfL should recognise the full range of achievements for all learners. (ARG 2002a, pp. 2–3)

AfL is by definition a subset of all assessment, and so has its roots in the Latin verb *assidere* meaning 'to sit beside'. This suggests the use of assessment in a supportive developmental approach to learning rather than a detached testing of performance, and is a conception that resonates with the Assessment Reform Group's definition and principles. Practices associated with AfL such as sharing criteria with learners, developing classroom talk and questioning, giving appropriate feedback that is acted upon, and peer and self-assessment (Black and Wiliam 1998a) all entail the active involvement of students and rest on a constructivist theory of learning. Learning is viewed as a process rather than a product (Sadler 2007), something that students do rather than a commodity to acquire.

How learning is conceived has implications for assessment policy and classroom practice, including AfL. When teachers practise AfL they often report changing the way they think about what it is to teach, from 'delivering' a subject and 'covering' the curriculum to considering how best to facilitate student learning (Black et al. 2003). Students in turn are seen as being responsible for, and prime agents of, their own learning. Reconfiguring traditional views of teachers' and students' roles alters

relationships and transforms the culture of the classroom, as is evident in detailed studies and discussions of AfL (see for example, Swaffield 2008). Changes in classroom culture are at the heart of three factors or principles key to AfL identified by James and colleagues (James et al. 2007) – making learning explicit, promoting learning autonomy, and focusing on learning as opposed to performance.

These three factors are equally applicable to professional learning, with teachers becoming more aware of and responsible for their development, articulating what they are doing, feeling and learning, and taking a broader view of learning than test results or meeting narrow targets. For teachers to learn the new practices associated with leading AfL in the classroom, they in turn need an environment supportive of professional learning. In particular, it has been found that classroom-based collaborative enquiry is key to teachers' learning for the development of AfL (James et al. 2007; James and Pedder 2008).

In summary, assessment for learning is an approach to learning and teaching based on the formative use of assessment, with learner engagement and the development of skills and dispositions for lifelong learning at its heart, and supported by a substantial body of evidence that AfL not only helps students learn but also helps them become better learners.

Leading Assessment for Learning at the National Level

The UK Context: Four Nations

The four nations of the United Kingdom – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – have each grappled with assessment policy, and in different ways and to different extents each country has endorsed AfL. In all four there are histories of teachers, local authority and academics promoting and developing AfL practices, but as Broadfoot (1996) points out, the differences among them are partly a product of their varying cultural, social and political contexts. Education in Scotland has a long and distinctive tradition, and at the end of the twentieth century national policy on the curriculum and assessment was couched in guidelines rather than legislation. The establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 cemented 'north of the border' uniqueness. The setting up of the National Assembly for Wales in the same year paved the way for greater educational change in the principality. Previously education had been under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for England and Wales, although from the establishment of the Welsh Office in 1964 decisions about education had been increasingly devolved (Daugherty and Elfed-Owens 2003). In Northern Ireland education, along with so many other aspects of life, reflects that province's political and social history, and the devolution of legislative powers in recent years has at times been interrupted as a consequence of sectarian conflict. Daugherty and Ecclestone (2006) talk of the "four 'policy trajectories' to be found within the UK"(p. 167), and it is to the individual nations that the discussion now turns.

Assessment for Learning in England

Prior to 1988 educational assessment in England was typified by public examinations and preparation for them at secondary school level, a legacy of testing for selection at the end of the primary phase, the use of a variety of commercial standardised tests for assessing basics such as reading age in the primary sector, and diversity of practice in infant and nursery classes including some excellent observational-based formative assessment. Overall the emphasis was on assessment for summative purposes, although some developments in secondary schools such as course work and graded tests lent themselves more to formative approaches. Mention has already been made of Records of Achievement, an approach to recognising and celebrating achievement in its broadest sense that had learner involvement at its heart.

1988 saw the milestone of the Education Reform Act, the most far-reaching legislation affecting education in England (and Wales) since the 1944 Butler Act, which gave the weight of law to the national curriculum and its assessment. The national curriculum assessment arrangements as implemented were predominantly summative, although in many classrooms, schools and local authorities the educational importance of formative assessment was understood, and appropriate practices encouraged and developed. However, doing so alongside a legally required, new and extremely detailed set of summative assessment arrangements was very difficult.

In the last decade of the twentieth century AfL was enthusiastically promoted and pursued by some individuals and groups across the educational spectrum, including school practitioners, local authority officials, academics, voluntary bodies such as AAIA, and sections of national organisations such as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. However, AfL practice was extremely patchy as it struggled to establish a firm foothold or achieve any degree of penetration amidst the complex summative statutory requirements.

The Black and Wiliam review published in 1998 was welcomed by AfL cognoscenti as it provided quantitative evidence that formative assessment raises standards of achievement as well as making explicit classroom approaches to AfL. The influence of the study cannot be attributed solely to its findings and its quality as a piece of academic research: other similar reviews (Natriello 1987; Crooks 1988) have remained in relative academic obscurity. A significant aspect of the Black and Wiliam review was the concurrent publication and publicity of an A5 sized booklet 'Inside the black box' summarising the research and highlighting the policy implications in accessible language and form (Black and Wiliam 1998b). However, it appears that even this slim booklet has been read only selectively by policy makers in England: their leadership of AfL has been at best narrowly focused, at worst a complete distortion.

When 18 years of Conservative government came to an end in 1997 the new Labour administration took up office to the refrain of 'education, education, education'. They maintained the established focus on targets and on raising standards as measured by national tests and examinations. Central government increasingly took

more and more control, not only of the curriculum, assessment and outcomes, but also of pedagogy. A series of 'national strategies' was introduced in England, beginning with a literacy strategy for primary schools with tightly prescribed lesson formats. The numeracy strategy that followed included some excellent material promoting classroom questioning and dialogue, elements that were recognised and welcomed by AfL practitioners and advocates. The national strategy materials for the lower stage of secondary schooling included a folder devoted to whole school training materials for AfL (DfES 2004a) and promoted sound practice. When the original literacy and numeracy strategies were revised and brought together in the primary strategy (DfES 2004b) AfL was explicitly included, but, as AAIA (2005) observed, distorted into frequent summative assessment rather than genuine formative practice. Disquiet at the tendency for government to promote a data driven, repeated mini summative interpretation of AfL was also voiced by other groups including a coalition of teacher professional associations (ATL and PAT 2004).

Nevertheless, despite some reference to AfL as a plank of the briefly proclaimed 'personalisation' agenda (Hargreaves 2004), the dominant government discourse around AfL was tightly linked to national curriculum levels of attainment and test results. Teachers and school leaders now operate in a culture where the results of national tests and examinations taken by pupils have become more and more significant. Results influence both inspection frequency and judgements, in turn determining individual headteacher's future employment, teachers' performance evaluation and pay, schools' status, funding, and popularity with parents and hence student enrolment. The influence of results also extends to local authorities' standing and therefore their inspections and employees' careers, and to public perception of the performance of the government in respect of education. With so much resting on annual test results, short-term tactical approaches to raising attainment scores (such as teaching to the test and repeated test practice) become increasingly attractive. Since AfL is a way of working that takes time to adopt, develop and embed, and is essentially a longer term strategic and capacity building approach (Gray et al. 1999), tensions are perhaps inevitable.

Notwithstanding these tensions it is clear that genuine AfL practice has developed in some pockets. The English inspection body Ofsted reported on the implementation of AfL and on its impact. Their report demonstrated that inspectors understood that AfL 'is a joint activity between the teacher and the pupil' (Ofsted 2008, p. 8), that it takes place all the time not just at the end or after lessons, and that student self-assessment is a key feature. They observed what they described as excellent practice but reported that it was not very well established across schools. The Ofsted survey was in the context of the national strategies' focus on AfL, but practice in the 43 schools they visited, as well as in others throughout England, was undoubtedly influenced by independent research and development work running parallel to the government strategy. A number of these projects, mentioned in the Introduction, adopted different approaches to the leadership of AfL.

The King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project (Black et al. 2003) involved intensive support from the King's team and the two local authority advisers for the initially 24, and subsequently 36, secondary teachers involved.

These teachers were presented with the findings of the Black and William 1998 review and then assisted to develop their classroom practice through further professional development, observations and feedback, and sharing of practice. The much larger scale Learning How to Learn project (James et al. 2007) involved 40 whole schools both primary and secondary, touching over 1,000 teachers across 5 local authorities, and was much more 'light touch'. Shirley Clarke's approach is to set up groups of teachers who meet with her for several days during the course of a year, exploring a specified aspect of AfL, returning to school to apply it and then sharing their findings (see Clarke 2008). Complementing these three major projects were many other lesser known but none the less locally influential developments involving schools, local authorities and academics.

The English government did in fact set up one AfL action research project, which ran from July 2005 until October 2006 under the auspices of the Secondary National Strategy (DfES 2007a). It involved eight secondary schools in eight local authorities throughout the country, together with three regional advisers. The project identified 13 key messages, each in relation to two fundamental points: firstly, AfL is about developing the independent learner, and secondly distributed leadership is necessary for the required whole school change. The AfL practice that was developed and promoted through the '8 schools project' was faithful to the principles and approaches of AfL as defined, understood and endorsed by experts and dedicated practitioners in the field. This fidelity was to a large extent lost in 'The Assessment for Learning Strategy' published by the Department the following year (DCSF 2008).

The national strategy was introduced by the minister Jim Knight with the promise of £150 million over three years for teachers' continuing professional development in AfL. The strategy quoted the Assessment Reform Group's definition of AfL, but misrepresented the ARG's principles claiming them to be benefits of AfL and conflating two of them, while not attributing their source. The national AfL strategy in England builds on 'Assessing Pupils' Progress' (DfES 2007b) and the related 'Making Good Progress' pilot, which take the emphasis away from developing pupils as independent learners and focuses instead on teachers making frequent assessments about pupils' attainment in relation to national curriculum levels. (For a detailed critique of the strategy see Swaffield 2009). The distortion and erroneous interpretation of assessment for learning represented in the national strategy is disseminated with all the weight of the national programme, complete with consultants in every authority, targets and monitoring regimes. The revised national inspection framework (Ofsted 2009) gives a prominent position to AfL, so further strengthening the pressure on teachers and schools. As with every policy though, its implementation in the classroom is influenced by mediators particularly in the form of national strategy and local authority personnel, inspectors and school leaders. Ultimately how AfL is enacted in classes and experienced by pupils depends on individual teachers. However, in England in 2010 the odds are stacked against authentic AfL.

> The honest answer to the question of how formative assessment is working, at least in England, is that effective practice is still patchy. Teachers who generally appear to have a strong idealistic commitment to the thinking behind these concepts often struggle to put them into practice in the face of competing pressures on their time and priorities. (Mansell et al. 2009, p. 22)

Assessment for Learning in Scotland

In Scotland 'Assessment is for Learning' claims to be a coherent framework for assessment (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/about/whatisaifl.asp) encompassing three strands or uses of assessment – assessment 'for', 'as' and 'of' learning. The first two strands of the model distinguish between assessment that is used to support classroom learning and teaching (assessment 'for' learning), and assessment that promotes learning how to learn (assessment 'as' learning), both of which contrast with the summative third strand, assessment 'of' learning. The AifL programme is designed to help teachers and school leaders to use assessment both to support and to measure learning.

Assessment is for Learning (AifL) was launched in 2002, but its historical roots can be traced back to the 'Primary Memorandum of 1965' which Clark (1997) says identified different purposes of assessment and pointed to the relationship of assessment to children's learning. Over 20 years later a consultation paper 'Curriculum and assessment in Scotland: a policy for the 1990s' (SED 1987) was the precursor to the 5–14 Development Programme of curriculum and assessment. Assessment guidelines (SOED 1991) promoted 'assessment as an integral part of learning and teaching' (p. 12) while national tests ('when ready' tests rather than the originally proposed conventional tests opposed strongly by some teachers and parents) and an Assessment of Achievement Programme provided the monitoring and accountability aspects of assessment. Research by Swann and Brown (1997) found little evidence of formative assessment practice; a subsequent review (SOEID 1999) reported that the assessment guidelines were being implemented to only a very limited extent, and concluded that a coherent system of assessment was required in order to develop the support for learning purposes of assessment as well as the monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Following a period of consultation and a parliamentary debate in September 2001, the Assessment Action Group was set up to oversee a development programme that became known as 'Assessment is for Learning'. The design of the programme recognised that teachers mediate any policy rather than straightforwardly 'deliver' it, that implementation needs to be contextually specific, and that development is not simply a matter of teachers acquiring knowledge and skills but rather a matter of collaborative learning and knowledge building with researchers and policy makers. Resources were provided to release teachers from the classroom for meetings to develop and reflect on the practices they were trying in their classrooms.

Ten initial projects within the programme led to the identification of the three strands referred to above. Assessment of learning, assessment as learning and assessment for learning have come to be represented as sides of a triangle, with curriculum, learning and teaching, and assessment at the vertices (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/aiflschool/index.asp). While the triangular figure accentuates the connectedness of the three elements, this chapter focuses on the assessment *for* learning aspect. The AfL proposals were the subject of research conducted by

Hayward et al. ([2004](#)) who studied evaluation reports from 33 primary and secondary schools from across Scotland, which were voluntarily involved in the AifL pilot programme. While all participating teachers regarded it as a success, researchers judged that five of the 33 schools had actually made little progress. Particular difficulties arose when the developing AfL practices (such as talking with a partner, and taking time to think something through) were at odds with the individual quick response work required for the national tests. As far as the teachers' learning and commitment were concerned, collaborative supported development work on an issue that resonated with teachers' values was found to be an effective approach.

An evaluation report of the whole AifL programme (Condie et al. [2005](#)) concluded that the combination of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' approaches was effective in that teachers and schools were able to take some control themselves over the developments, whilst being supported by funding, networks, professional development and expert input. The funding enabled schools to invest staff time in the early stages and 'kick-start' the programme. Given diversity across the system in which schools are able to exercise choice means that generalisations across the programme become more difficult, and the risk of fragmentation is inevitable. The necessity of 'top-down' support in the form of funding, conferences, meetings and networks for 'bottom-up' development as teachers sustainably change their practice was endorsed by the Institute of London's evaluation team (Kirton et al. [2007](#)).

In 2004 the then Minister for Education and Young People made a commitment that by 2007 all schools in Scotland would be part of the AifL programme. Two ways of achieving this were identified: schools and local authorities developing assessment practice while giving particular attention to the management of change, and schools working in 'associated schools groups' on short-term assessment focused action research projects involving professional dialogue and collaboration. Case studies were produced and shared, local authority assessment co-ordinators and school practitioners met regularly, and schools were encouraged to use a specially designed 'toolkit' to evaluate assessment practice.

The Assessment is for Learning programme with its dedicated funding ran until 2008, when it was incorporated into 'Curriculum for Excellence'. The 'Strategic Vision and Key Principles' of assessment for Curriculum for Excellence was published in September 2009, heralding the publication of a detailed Framework for Assessment. The revised assessment system (www.ltsscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/ assessmentandachievement) reflects the values and principles of the new curriculum from 3 to 18, and emphasises assessment of learning rather than the more formative aspects.

Assessment for Learning in Wales

Devolution has seen Wales move from the implementation of policy created in London, which was to a greater or lesser extent policy recontextualisation, to distinctive policy formulation (Daugherty and Ecclestone [2006](#)). The influential

Daugherty Assessment Review Group (Daugherty 2004) recommended that assessment for learning should be central to developments in Wales. In her endorsement of these recommendations the minister Jane Davidson avoided the tensions between assessment used for formative and summative purposes experienced in Scotland by not only promoting AfL but also moving away from a national testing regime: national testing in Wales was ended in 2005.

AfL in Wales was promoted through the 'Developing Thinking and Assessment for Learning Programme', a programme based on collaboration between civil servants (from the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS)), local authorities and schools; networking; funded reflection and planning time for teachers (Mansell et al. 2009). The programme ran from 2005 to 2008, and involved nine Local Education Authorities, a group of special schools, and a total of 42 schools (28 primary, 10 secondary, 4 special schools). The programme encouraged teachers to undertake action research focusing on the development of AfL practices. Support was in the form of an initial launch conference, a mid-way conference to share experiences, support booklets (WAG 2007a, b), DCELLS visits and local authority support.

The Welsh Assembly Government commissioned an independent study of the Developing Thinking and Assessment for Learning Programme (BMG 2008), an evaluation that drew on data from questionnaires, school visits and discussions with local authority advisers. Almost all the teachers (93%) had tried to develop thinking as part of everyday practice, whereas 85% reported trying to use AfL strategies most or all of the time. The evaluation reported overwhelming support for the programme, with teachers in particular indicating improvements in a range of areas. There was evidence that teachers had changed their practice in a number of ways and that learners had become more engaged with their learning. There was a perception that learners' performance had improved although it was recognised that improvement on attainment data would take longer to be evident and be difficult to attribute directly. Schools were moving towards embedding thinking and AfL strategies.

Assessment for Learning in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland context includes an educational system of faith-based schools, and selection at 11 for secondary schooling. The establishment of a devolved legislative assembly was stalled by 'deep and longstanding political conflicts' (Daugherty and Ecclestone 2006, p. 163). A strategic planning group, the Partnership Management Group (PMB), representing a range of educational partners plans the implementation of a revised curriculum. AfL has been identified as one of the areas for implementation, and professional development programmes support its incorporation into school policies.

A three year Assessment for Learning Action Research Project was supported by the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and Education and Library Boards. The project began in 2004 with 25 primary schools, but by 2007, 65 schools across the age range were involved. It led to a set of materials

including a comprehensive and attractive guide (CCEA 2009) with accompanying booklets and continuing professional development materials. AfL is now seen as an integral part of the approach to teaching and learning in Northern Ireland (PMB 2007a, b), with the overlap of AfL with classroom strategies for 'Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities', another major plank of the curriculum, made explicit (CCEA 2009, p. 59).

Comparing Four Approaches to Leading Assessment for Learning

Looking across the four countries' approaches to leading assessment for learning there are a number of similarities and differences among them as regards conception, context and culture and process.

In terms of conception Wales and Northern Ireland explicitly link AfL with thinking skills, while in Scotland the 'assessment as learning' strand of the whole assessment development programme has strong similarities with thinking skills. By contrast in England thinking skills do not feature in official material about AfL, despite there being well established and recognised programmes (see for example Fisher 1998; Leat 1998; Shayer and Adey 2002), and the Department having commissioned a review and evaluation of research and how it might translate into classroom practice (DfEE 1999). However, the largest AfL research project in England, Learning How to Learn (James et al. 2007), as its title suggests, conceived AfL as a means to developing the skills of lifelong learning. Also, a number of teachers see and make the links themselves between AfL and thinking skills, combining the approaches in their practice.

The national strategy for AfL in England firmly links AfL with attainment measured in national curriculum levels and sub-levels, not just as a periodic summative judgement of performance, but much more insidiously as ongoing assessment. Raising levels of attainment is of course an aim for the other three countries as well, and in Scotland the third stand alongside assessment *for* and assessment *as* learning in the Assessment is for Learning programme is assessment *of* learning. However, this is in the context of teacher assessment and national monitoring by sampling rather than the national tests in England, where the dominant culture is performativity. Writing about the Assessment is for Learning programme in Scotland, Condie et al. (2005) contend that the ultimate aim is 'a change of culture within the schools' (p151), whereas the opening sentence of the English Assessment for Learning Strategy states '… we aim to support schools in developing assessment for learning to enhance learning and *improve the rate at which pupils progress*' (italics added) (DCSF 2008, p. 3). The approach in England will influence, and arguably has influence culture, but in the wrong direction. AfL is becoming accepted as a data driven exercise that serves the standards driven performativity norms pervading English education at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century.

In terms of process there are very strong similarities among the approaches to development taken in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. All three countries

supported 'bottom up' action research, whereas in England the central education department's commitment to anything similar was limited to a 1-year project for only eight schools. Admittedly many other schools in England have been supported in similar action research development work, but the instigators have been local authorities and universities rather than government. In contrast to the other three nations of the UK, the approach in England has been a 'top down' national strategy of dubious quality and mixed messages.

Leading Assessment for Learning in Classrooms, Schools, Locally and Regionally

Teachers

Whatever the national policy approach, it is teachers in classrooms who facilitate the development of AfL with their pupils. Doing so authentically is not a simple matter of implementing a set of prescribed procedures but rather a process of understanding and internalising principles that guide the learning and teaching processes, taking account of the specific context. In two major research projects in England, the King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project (Black et al. 2003) and the Learning How to Learn project (James et al. 2007), teachers were introduced to ideas and research findings about AfL from which they then developed their practice. Both projects demonstrated the important influence of teachers' values and beliefs in developing and leading AfL. Although teachers appreciate practical suggestions as to how to implement AfL these can become ritualised and mechanistic if simply 'doing' AfL is divorced from thinking about the underlying principles. Thus one of the key messages from the LHTL project was that teachers' practices and beliefs need to be developed together (James et al. 2007). Those teachers that thought about and applied principles of learning were more inclined to be reflective and take responsibility for what happened in the classroom (as opposed for example to blaming the students or external factors), and these were the teachers that had the most success with implementing AfL. This approach in turn promoted striking changes in classroom relationships and culture, with students taking more responsibility for their learning, and the whole classroom developing into a learning community. Thus the leadership role of classroom teachers in relation to AfL is not simply one of doing, but also of thinking and being.

School Leaders

Whilst teachers undoubtedly have the most direct influence on pupils' engagement with AfL, their motivation, enthusiasm and effectiveness are hugely influenced by school leaders such as assessment co-ordinators, lead teachers and headteachers or

principals. The Learning How to Learn project concluded that 'the key challenge for leadership is to create the space and climate for school staff to reflect on and share aspects of their practice' (James et al. 2007 p. 217). School leaders need to create the conditions for teachers to collaborate in classroom-based inquiry where together they plan, try out and evaluate new ideas. Changes need to be tested, challenged and discussed so that new practices become embedded and sustained, otherwise they remain as superficial and transitory, likely to be cast aside when the next initiative is given prominence. The need for collaborative working among teachers and school leaders maintaining a focus on and support for the intended change were also key messages from the 8 schools project (DfES 2007a). This project advocated a combination of both 'top down' and 'bottom up' approaches to change, and recognised the importance of school leaders as well as teachers developing a deep understanding of AfL.

Local and Regional Leadership

The development of authentic AfL practice has been further enhanced by links among schools, enabling teachers and school leaders to exchange ideas and experiences with others. This was a feature of the various research and development projects cited in this chapter, as well as the national policies in the constituent nations of the UK: Scotland and Wales in particular used conferences as a way of enabling practitioners from different schools to meet and further their understanding and practice of AfL. Such opportunities require thoughtful and informed leadership if they are to maximise their potential. Local authority advisers and consultants can play lead roles in setting up and facilitating such events, as well as initiating informal networking by using their knowledge of practice in different schools to forge productive links among teachers and school leaders. Organisations such as the Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment are structured regionally and groups draw on their members' knowledge and expertise to write and publish materials that support the development of AfL (see for example AAIA 2009). Courses and conferences set up by local authorities and universities also often provide rich opportunities for networking and collaborative learning.

Student Leadership

Particularly noteworthy contributions to the leadership of AfL come from the students themselves. As AfL is developed so the culture in classrooms change and learning and teaching becomes much more of a partnership between teachers and students. Students can then exercise leadership, as for example in the King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project when a student recognised that the lesson was not going as intended and appropriately suggested an alternative

approach to the teacher (Black et al. 2003). Some national policy documents acknowledge the role of students in the development of AfL practices (for example DfES 2004a). Redbridge local authority in England has for some years facilitated student AfL conferences where the participants and presenters are primary and secondary pupils from schools in the area, and primary pupils have ably devised and led presentations at national conferences on AfL (as at the AAIA 2009 annual conference). Soo Hoo's exhortation to listen to '… the treasure in our very own backyards – the students' (Soo Hoo 1993, p. 389) is particularly applicable in relation to AfL.

Using the Leadership for Learning Framework

Leading AfL could be thought of as a specific example of leading any kind of learning, and so a framework of Leadership for Learning should be applicable. There are a number of models that link leadership and learning (see for example Dempster 2009), one of which will be used to analyse the leadership of AfL in the UK discussed in this chapter. The LfL framework was developed in the context of an international project (MacBeath and Dempster 2009). It comprises five principles relating to student, professional and organisational learning, in which leadership and learning are both conceived of as activity, conjoined by agency, and the whole is framed by moral purpose and democratic values. Moral purpose infuses authentic interpretations of AfL, with advocates – practitioners and policymakers alike – recognising AfL as 'a good thing', being learner centred and promoting as it does learning how to learn as well as learning subject specifics. For many teachers it has been this resonance with deep fundamental values about learning and education that has been so powerful and engaging.

The five Leadership for Learning principles may be summarised as:

1. Focus on learning
2. Conditions for learning
3. Dialogue
4. Shared leadership
5. Shared accountability.

Each headline is expanded by a number of statements, to which reference will be made in the subsequent discussion.

Focus on Learning

The first principle, a focus on learning, resonates with the idea that AfL is learning orientated as opposed to performance orientated. Fundamental to this principle is the kind of learning that is valued, and as has been seen different interpretations of AfL privilege different kinds of learning. Elaboration of the LfL first principle

begins with the statement that 'everyone is a learner', a perspective crucial to leading AfL. Not only students but also teachers, school leaders, researchers and policy makers should all be learners. This perspective is integral to the action research approaches taken in the leadership of AfL in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but it is less obvious in the official approach to leading AfL in England. There the government appears to have learnt one of the messages from the Black and Wiliam review – that practising AfL improves test results – but to have misunderstood or ignored other equally if not more important messages. Policy makers in England appear not to have understood the essence of AfL, nor to have grasped that 'the claimed advantages [of formative assessment] only apply to authentic interpretations' (Black et al. 2003, p. 122).

Moreover they appear to have ignored the research evidence that a test and performance focused pedagogy is damaging to learners' motivation, self-esteem, and sustained learning, and actually increases, rather than decreases, the gap between the higher and lower attaining pupils (Dweck 1999; ARG 2002b; Harlen and Deakin Crick 2003). They also appear not to have learnt from their own research, the eight schools project (DfES 2007a), which came up with four key messages for teaching and learning and nine for the leadership and management of whole school change. The messages are centred around the development of independent learners and developing distributed leadership but they are barely recognisable in the national strategy; indeed the report appears to have been lost, buried or forgotten as the English national strategy document published just a year later makes no reference to it (DCSF 2008).

Conditions for Learning

The second LfL principle is concerned with creating conditions favourable to learning, for all learners including students and teachers. This includes materials and resources that enhance thinking about learning and the practice of teaching, and in this respect all the professional development resources developed and produced by national policy makers and consultants could be seen as contributing to the conditions for teacher learning. Some professional development documents, for example those published in Wales and in Northern Ireland (WAG 2007b; CCEA 2009) include materials for teachers to use with pupils.

However, materials and resources are only one, albeit tangible, aspect of conditions favourable to learning. Equally if not more important are the cultures that nurture everyone's learning, the opportunities to reflect on learning, the physical and social spaces that stimulate learning, and the secure environments that support risk taking and learning through challenge (MacBeath and Dempster 2009). These aspects can be seen in the action research approaches to the development of AfL taken in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and point to the importance of consideration being given to creating conditions for learning for everyone and at all levels, not just for students.

The policy context can have a huge influence on the conditions for learning, as reported by the Learning How to Learn project in England for example, where it was found that teachers 'felt constrained by a policy context that encouraged rushed curriculum coverage, teaching to the test and a tick-box culture (James et al. 2007, p. 216).

Dialogue

Dialogue as a principle of LfL involves professional conversations in the spirit of enquiry, attempting to achieve coherence through the sharing of values, understandings and practices (MacBeath and Dempster 2009), all of which again are evident in action research approaches to developing AfL. The networking to explore different perspectives engaging researchers and practitioners that also features in the LfL dialogue principle elaboration is similarly reflected for example in the Associated School Groups that were a feature of the multiple networks set up in Scotland (Hutchinson and Hayward 2005). Commenting on the situation in England, Mansell et al. (2009) call for a better defined relationship between politicians and the assessment community, a relationship that could be enhanced through dialogue.

Shared Leadership

Shared leadership is explicit in many approaches to leading AfL particularly in the exhortation and exercise of distributed leadership. The idea that AfL will flourish more when leadership spreads beyond the few formally recognised leaders to include many of those involved in the enterprise is quite commonplace. The fourth LfL principle includes the idea that shared leadership is symbolised in the day-to-day flow of activities in the school (MacBeath and Dempster 2009), a situation that is evident in classrooms and schools when authentic AfL is practised. The LfL principle also talks of drawing on the experience and expertise of students as well as staff, reflecting the role of student leadership referred to earlier, and says that collaborative working across traditional boundaries is valued and promoted. Although some development projects have pointed to differences in AfL between subjects (for example Black et al. 2003), much can also be learnt by considering AfL practices in other contexts, as participants on mixed courses have found.

Shared Accountability

Tensions in the development of AfL can arise when assessment focused on accountability to external bodies through narrow measures is prominent. However, the LfL fifth principle promotes a view of shared accountability in which self-evaluation,

congruence with core values, internal accountability and considerations of sustainability all feature. Such elements are inherent to truly collaborative enquiry-based approaches to developing AfL; Hutchinson and Hayward (2005), commenting on the work in Scotland, point to the interdependence of all players, and discuss the difference between the process of personal learning planning as opposed to the document itself – to which prominence is sometimes given for external accountability purposes.

Conclusion

At the level of national policy considerable differences may be discerned between the leadership of AfL developments in England and the other three nations of the UK. There are also differences among the approaches taken in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, although they are similar in being characterised by the employment of action research. Leadership of AfL is exercised not just by national policy-makers, influential as they are, but also by teachers, school leaders, researchers and consultants. Although they operate in the contexts and cultures created by national policy, there are many common elements in their work.

The five Leadership for Learning principles provide a framework for evaluating and guiding the leadership of AfL. All the principles relate to and give guidance to the leadership of assessment for learning, but it is probably the first principle that carries the most important message. 'Maintaining a focus on learning as an activity …' (MacBeath and Dempster 2009) is an important reminder that emphasis should be given to the process of learning (which is the essence of AfL), rather than measuring necessarily restricted aspects of learning (the concern of summative assessment). The first principle continues '…in which everyone is a learner' – pointing to the crucial importance of everyone involved with leading AfL to be learners themselves, whether it be through action research, dialogue, reflection, or careful reading and understanding of robust research. Academics, teachers, school leaders, consultants and policy makers all need to be continually learning and deepening their understanding of authentic AfL if their leadership of AfL is to have the desire for positive effects.

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Part IX
Responding to Diversity: Different Ways of Moving Towards Leadership for Learning

Chapter 58
Education Leaders Can Reduce Educational Disparities*

Russell Bishop

Introduction

> We are dealing, it would seem, not so much with culturally deprived children as with culturally deprived schools. And the task to be accomplished is not to revise, and amend, and repair deficient children, but to alter and transform the atmosphere and operations of the schools to which we commit these children. Only by changing the nature of the educational experience can we change the product. To continue to define the difficulty as inherent in the raw material, the children, is plainly to blame the victim and to acquiesce in the continuation of educational inequality (Ryan 1976, pp. 61–62).

This chapter is about how education leaders can act to reduce educational disparities for indigenous and other minoritized[1] people through strategic goal setting, supporting effective pedagogies, promoting distributed leadership, enacting inclusivity, using evidence and owning the need for reform. Examples will be drawn from a large-scale, theory-based education reform project called Te Kotahitanga which is currently running in 50 secondary schools in New Zealand. This chapter seeks to provide a general account of how leadership and learning can be linked through particular actions by teachers, schools, communities and educational policy makers.

Our experiences in Te Kotahitanga have shown that while classrooms are the most effective initial sites for educational reform (Alton-Lee 2003; Elmore et al. 1996), teachers who work in isolation are unlikely to develop and maintain to any significant

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[1] "Minoritised" is a term used in Shields et al. (2005) to refer to people who have been ascribed characteristics of a minority. To be minoritised one does not need to be in the numerical minority, only to be treated as if one's position and perspective are of less worth; to be silenced or marginalised. Hence, for example, in schools on the Navajo reservation with over 95% of the population being Navajo, or in Bedouin schools, we find characteristics of the students similar to those we may find among Māori in mainstream schools in which they are actually in the numerical minority.

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extent "new teaching strategies spontaneously and on their own" (Elmore et al. 1996, p. 7). Our experience supports Coburn (2003), who suggests that teachers are better able to sustain change when there are "mechanisms in place at multiple levels of the system to support their efforts" (p. 6). In other words, teachers are strengthened in their capacity to sustain change if they are supported by a broader systemic focus on reform within the school and at national policy levels (Hattie 1999). This chapter presents a model of reform at three levels, classroom, school and policy, that seeks to identify how leaders at these three levels can act to address the current problems we are facing in terms of educational disparities.

The Current Situation

The major social challenge facing New Zealand today are the continuing social, economic and political disparities within our nation, primarily between the descendants of the European colonisers (Pākehā) and the indigenous Māori people. Although some progress has been seen in recent times, Māori continue to have higher levels of unemployment, are more likely to be employed in low-paying employment, have much higher levels of incarceration, illness and poverty than the rest of the population, and are generally under-represented in the positive social and economic indicators of society. These are all outcomes of a process of colonisation that removed Māori control and power over their resource base, language and culture, and which, given a different set of relationships, could have seen Māori people being full participants in the emerging economy and society of the new nation, instead of being over-represented in the negative indices (Bishop and Glynn 1999; Walker 1990).

The need to invest well in our children was the subject of a recent report to Parliament, entitled the Inquiry into Making the Schooling System Work for Every Child, by the Education and Science Committee of the House of Representatives (2008). In their report, they point to the part education should play in addressing disparities in terms of the impact on Māori as people, and as people expected to contribute to the nation. They point out that because Māori represent 28 percent of newborn New Zealanders, the increasing proportion of Māori in the population means that unless "the gap between the performance of Māori students and others is not addressed, the negative consequences for New Zealand will grow exponentially" (p. 10). Professor Mason Durie is quoted as saying that "until the disparity in Māori achievement is corrected, Māori will continue to feature disproportionately in indicators of poor outcomes, and will be a wasted resource for New Zealand" (p. 10, emphasis added). The report then identifies how this situation not only affects those who fail at school later in life, in terms of their earning and employment potential, their health and well-being, and the strong "connection between non-engagement with school and youth offending" (p. 11), but also has effects on the wider society:

> As employment bevcomes less labour-intensive, and more dependent on the use of technology, fewer jobs will be available for those who lack functional literacy and numeracy. The larger the group, the more difficult will it be for New Zealand to create and sustain a high-performing, internationally competitive economy. (p. 11)

The Education Counts website[2] also identifies a substantial body of evidence demonstrating that students who are not well served by the education system are heavily disadvantaged in later life. For example, those with higher levels of education are more likely to participate in the labour market, face lower risks of unemployment, have greater access to further training and receive higher earnings on average. Conversely, people with no formal school qualifications have unemployment rates far exceeding those with qualifications, and have the lowest median incomes:

> In 2006, the unemployment rate for those with a bachelor's degree or higher was 2.1 percent; for those with another tertiary qualification 2.9 percent; with only a school qualification 4.1 percent; and with no qualification 5.2 percent … The median weekly income for those with bachelors' and higher degrees was $785; for those with other tertiary qualifications it was $575; for those with school qualifications it was $335; and for those with no qualifications $310. (Education and Science Committee 2008, pp. 10–11)

The Education Counts website also identifies that young people leaving school without any qualifications are likely to have difficulty performing in the workforce and may face difficulties in terms of life-long learning or returning to formal study in later years. They refer to a considerable number of research studies which show a strong connection between early school leavers and unemployment and/or lower incomes, and are in turn generally related to poverty and dependence on income support.

Despite the choice provided by Māori-medium education in New Zealand,[3] the vast majority of Māori students attend public/mainstream schools and are taught by non-Māori teachers who have problems relating to, and addressing, the educational needs of Māori students (Bishop and Berryman 2006). In addition, decades of educational reforms and policies such as integration, multiculturalism and biculturalism have failed to support teachers adequately in addressing systemic shortcomings. These reforms have made very little difference for the large proportion of Māori students who have attended mainstream schools since these educational disparities were first statistically identified over 40 years ago (Hunn 1960).

It is unfortunate that despite these attempts at reform, and encouraging indications that disparities began to reduce in 2005 (Hood 2008), disparities still remain. The overall academic achievement levels of Māori students is low; more leave school without any qualifications than do their non-Māori counterparts; their retention rate to age 17 is far less than that for non-Māori; their rate of suspension from school is three to five times higher, depending on gender; they are over-represented in special education programmes for behavioural issues; they enrol in preschool programmes in lower proportions than other groups; they tend to be over-represented in low-stream education classes; they receive less academic feedback than do children of the majority culture; they are more likely than other students to be found in vocational curriculum streams; they leave school earlier, with fewer

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[2] http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/, retrieved 2007.

[3] Adrienne Alton-Lee (2008) provides us with evidence that students in Māori-medium classrooms are achieving at higher rates than their contemporaries in mainstream schools.

formal qualifications; and they enrol in tertiary education in lower proportions (Hood 2008; Ministry of Education 2005).

Addressing these educational disparities is a difficult, yet necessary, task for educators at all levels within our system. Most countries that have diverse ethnic student populations subscribe to this policy priority, for this is where educational disparities really reveal themselves: among the marginalised and minoritised peoples within mainstream educational settings.

A model for Effective Leadership

Developing a model for effective leadership needs to commence with the understanding, as identified above, that the key to change is teacher action supported by responsive structural reform (Elmore 2004). In our earlier work (Bishop et al. 2003, 2007) we investigated what effective teacher action looks like. However, this chapter presents a model of what "responsive structural reform" looks like in practice and what leaders need to do to implement this at the classroom, school and system-wide levels. This multi-level approach is necessary as numerous commentators (Datnow and Stringfield 2000; Fullan 2007; Glennan et al. 2004) stress, it is the interdependence of the actors/leaders at all the levels of the education system that is crucial for sustaining and expanding effective educational reform.

A significant stepping-off point in the development of this model was the large meta-analysis conducted by Cynthia Coburn (2003) in which she looked for key indicators of scalability of education reforms. The issue of scalability is pertinent to this consideration of leadership and inclusivity because contextually, the issue of scaling up, of extending and sustaining educational reform, is fundamental to issues of leadership at the systemic level. This is because scaled up educational reforms have the potential to make a major impact on the disparities that exist in our society. It is perhaps necessary to acknowledge that while educational reform on its own cannot cure historical disparities, it can play a major part in a comprehensive approach to addressing social, economic and political disparities.

Current approaches to scaling up educational reform have not worked for Māori and other minoritised students. Most attempts are short term, poorly funded at the outset, and often abandoned before any real changes can be seen, to be replaced by some "bold new initiative". In contrast, educational reforms need to have built into them, from the very outset, those elements which ensure that they are sustained in the original sites and spread to others. These elements will allow educational reforms to be scaled up in the confidence that the reforms will not only be able to be sustained in existing and new sites, but that, above all, they will work to reduce disparities and realise the potential of those students currently not well served by education. Put simply, educational reforms that can be sustained and extended can have an impact on educational and social disparities through increasing educational opportunities for students previously denied these options.

Significantly, for the purposes of this argument, Coburn (2003) noted that few studies actually consider these issues of scalability: only 18 of 44 projects she studied focused on efforts to scale up reform initiatives, and few of these "involved investigations of schools that had been involved in the reform for 4 or more years" (p. 6). Most of the studies she reviewed were of schools in their first few years of implementing a new, externally generated reform. Of particular significance was her concern that only one of the 44 projects she found looked at schools involved in reforms for which "an implementation period with additional resources and attention had officially ended" (p. 6).

Therefore, a major question that is not well addressed in the literature concerns how schools that have successfully initiated an educational reform sustain this reform in the face of the withdrawal of, or change in, external funding and personnel, competing priorities for resources, changing demands on schools, and teacher and leadership turnover. This in turn leads to the larger question of how sustainable reforms might be taken beyond those in the initial project. Coburn (2003) suggests that externally funded reforms are particularly vulnerable to this problem "because implementation typically involves a short-term influx of resources, professional development, and other forms of assistance to facilitate implementation that dissipates over time as external developers turn this attention to other sites" (p. 6). Yet Timperley et al. (2007), argue that external developers are a crucial ingredient in the successful development and implementation of effective professional development and the provision of professional learning opportunities for teachers.

Coburn (2003) provides a model in her paper, and this model proved to be a useful starting heuristic for considering how to take a project to scale in a large number of classrooms in project schools, how to sustain the gains made in these classrooms and schools, and how to take the project to other schools once it had proven to be successful in the initial schools. Coburn indicates four main components: pedagogy, sustainability, spread and ownership. However, in light of our experiences in Te Kotahitanga and the associated literature, we have developed the following model by adding three more components: the need for *goals*, i.e. an unrelenting focus on improving Māori (or any target) students' educational achievement; the need for leadership that is proactive, responsive and distributed; and the need to develop evaluation and monitoring instruments, along with raising the capacity and capability of staff in the schools to undertake this evaluation and monitoring.

The model (Fig. 58.1), which uses the acronym GPILSEO, was developed in a parallel study funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, and the first iteration, published as a monograph (Bishop and O'Sullivan 2005) was subsequently developed in Bishop et al. (2010). The model suggests that effective reform leaders: establish and develop specific measurable *goals* so that progress can be shown, monitored and acted upon; promote and support pedagogic reform; redesign the institutional and organisational framework; spread the reform; develop the capacity of people and systems to identify, gather and use evidence; and take ownership of the reform.

Fig. 58.1 GPILSEO: A reform initiative must have these elements from its inception (*Source*: Bishop and O'Sullivan 2005, p. 69)

It is important to emphasise that although each element is presented as if it should be implemented in an orderly, linear fashion, this is not how it works in reality. Rather, each element is interdependent and interacts with the others in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings. How this might look is shown in Table 58.1, again as an ideal type, which in practice would be far more complex in terms of interrelatedness and outcomes.

The part leaders need to play can also be analysed in terms of the GPILSEO model. Table 58.2 details some of the activities that leaders need to undertake so that effective educational reform is implemented.

Application of the Model to a Variety of Settings

This model can be applied to a variety of levels within education; classroom, school and system-wide. While each level is discretely presented here for the purposes of illustration, it is important to emphasise the interdependence of each of the elements within and between the various levels of the system: the classroom, the schools and the system as a whole.

GPILSEO at the Classroom Level

For a reform initiative to bring about sustainable change in classrooms, and which can then be extended to other classrooms, there must, from the very outset, be:

- A focus on improving targeted students' engagement, participation and achievement in the classroom;

Table 58.1 GPILSEO: details of each element

Establishing GOALs and a vision for improving targeted student participation and achievement	The reform must contain a means whereby individual teachers, schools and policy makers can set specific, measurable goals for improving student participation and achievement in their widest sense. Targeted student achievement must be the focus of the reform, because nonspecific education-for-all approaches simply maintain the status quo: while all students may increase their achievement, the disparities remain.
Developing a new PEDAGOGY to depth	The reform must contain a means of embedding the conceptual depth of the reform into the theorising and practice of the classroom teachers, school leaders, principals and national administrators. Coburn (2003) suggests that teachers and schools that have a deep understanding of the underlying theories and principles and can implement appropriate practices are better able to respond to the new demands and changing contexts in ways that will sustain and deepen the reform over time. Reform without depth of understanding will trivialise the initiative, and teachers and schools will revert to old explanations and practices in a short time. From their detailed synthesis of best evidence regarding what constitutes effective professional development and learning for teachers, Timperley et al. (2007) also found that sustainability appears to depend on whether teachers acquire an in-depth understanding of the underlying theoretical principles so that they can use their learning flexibly in their classrooms when new situations and challenges arise. Such understanding is relevant to all levels of the education system.
INSTITUTIONALISING the elements of the reform	Connections to and collaboration with other teachers, including teachers in other schools engaged in similar reform, is essential, and the institutionalisation of a means to ensure this happens in a systematic manner is an essential element of sustaining change. Such institutionalisations need to be prioritised so that they are seen to be supportive of the efforts of teachers and are aligned with, and indeed can inform, national policies. Similarly, structural and organisational arrangements need to be modified to accommodate new institutions and staffing (re)allocations.
Developing proactive, responsive and distributed LEADERSHIP	Proactive, responsive and distributed leadership is essential for the effective implementation and sustainability of a reform in a school. Leaders at all levels, classroom, school and system, need a sound understanding of the theoretical foundations of the reform and of what that theoretical basis means for classroom practice, school structure and culture, and national policies. Above all, leadership activities need to focus on and accept responsibility for student learning outcomes.
SPREADING the reform	The reform needs to contain, from its very inception, a means of spreading the reform within existing teachers' classrooms, and from there to teachers in other schools, and to community and national policy makers. This element is necessary to align the new norms of the reform within the school, within the norms of supporting institutions, and within communities associated with the school to ensure sustainability. Extending the reform to other sites is based on implementing the same flexible, responsive reform in new partnerships.

(continued)

Table 58.1 (continued)

Using EVIDENCE to engage in individual and collaborative problem solving and decision making	The reform needs, from the very outset, a means of engaging teachers in individual and collaborative evidence-based problem-solving activities. Evidence can range from narratives of students' experience, through to the results of norm-referenced standardised tests. Whatever the case, it is vital that the capacity of the staff is raised so that they can gather and use appropriate evidence of student performance. As the reform grows and develops in each school, systemic and institutional developments are necessary to support the changes taking place in the classroom. To ensure the development of a sequence of formative preceding summative uses of evidence, it is important that schools are able to undertake the task of data gathering and processing in real time. To do so they need to continue to develop the use of electronic student management systems so that the schools can use the data for formative purposes in collaborative settings, and the data can be aggregated for summative purposes.
OWNERSHIP of and authority for the goals of the reform must shift to the school	The last consideration is that ownership of and responsibility for the reform must shift from the external originators to within the school. This is necessary to ensure ongoing changes to the culture of the school are located in the hands of those most responsible for student learning and outcomes. As a result, one of the key considerations of reform is the creation of conditions within the project itself that will ensure that in-depth knowledge of and authority for the project shift from external actors to teachers, schools and policy makers. This shift in ownership ensures the reforms become self-generative while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the reform so that the aims of the reform are met. The shift also ensures new situations are addressed from an in-depth understanding of the reform's aims and approaches rather than from past practice. This shift in ownership is crucial, despite being the least-reported aspect in the literature on sustainability, because it is not the reform itself that needs to be preserved but rather the goal; in this case, the long-term, ongoing reduction of educational disparities through the raising of student achievement.

Source: Bishop et al. 2010, pp. 35–36

- A means of implementing a new pedagogy in depth, so that students and teachers can understand and competently implement new practices, and new theories of practice, in their day-to-day classroom relationships and interactions;
- A means of developing new institutions in the classroom, such as those developed using co-operative learning approaches;
- A means of developing distributed leadership within the classroom so that students can be initiators of, and take responsibility for, their own learning and support the learning of others;
- A means whereby the new classroom relationships and interactions include all students;

Table 58.2 GPILSEO: effective leadership activities

GPILSEO	Tasks associated with each GPILSEO element
Leaders establish and develop specific measurable goals so that progress can be shown, monitored over time, and acted upon.	Leaders: Build from the dissonance that is created when the difference between the current reality and the desired state is highlighted Learn how to set smart goals for student participation and achievement in its widest sense Develop specific goals to ensure that all involved can judge their progress toward the goals and responsively adjust their practice or learning Have the capacity (self-belief) to meet goals from their current understanding, or be able to learn what is needed to meet the goals Communicate with others about performance in terms of goals
Leaders support the development and implementation of new pedagogic relationships and interactions in the classroom.	Support the means of embedding the conceptual depth of the reform into the theorising and practice of the classroom teachers, principals and national administrators (teachers' conceptual depth is a major indicator of sustainability) Focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning, which increases their influence on student outcomes Create learning contexts in which learners gain the capacity and self-belief that they will be able to meet goals from their current understandings, or will be able to learn what is needed to meet the goals Promote the cultural identity of learners as being fundamental to learning relations and interactions Engage in classroom observations and provide specific feedback and/ or co-construct with teachers ways to improve classroom practice Provide specific professional learning opportunities for the consolidation of content and strategy learning Create and sustain effective school-wide professional learning communities Build capacity for teachers to take collective responsibility for student outcomes and collective action for changing teaching practice based on student experiences and academic performance Ensure collective action for changing teaching practice is based on student experiences and academic performance
Leaders change the institutional framework, its organisation and structure, to support the reform within the schools.	Create opportunities for connections to, and collaboration with, other teachers (including teachers in other schools) engaged in similar reform Institutionalise the means for teacher collaborative decision making in a systematic manner Prioritise the establishment of new institutions so that they are seen to be supportive of the efforts of teachers and are aligned with school plans and policies, and which inform national policies Modify structural and organisational arrangements to accommodate new institutions (such as the Cycle Plus components of Te Kotahitanga) and staffing (re)allocations (Re)prioritise funding to support the ongoing implementation of the reform's professional learning processes beyond the initial project funding phase Ensure the reform is symbolically represented within the school

Table 58.2 (continued)

GPILSEO	Tasks associated with each GPILSEO element
Leaders need to be knowledgeable about their role in the reform.	Focus on improving the performance of those least well served by the system
	Have a sound understanding of the theoretical foundations of the reform and of what that theoretical basis means for classroom practice, school structure and culture
	Accept responsibility for student learning outcomes demonstrate their understanding that:
	(a) A focus on Māori has strong benefits for other students
	(b) Pedagogic leadership has powerful effects on student outcomes
	(c) No one person can provide all leadership needs
	(d) Proactive, responsive and distributed leadership is essential for the sustainability of a reform in a school
Leaders need to spread the reform to include all students, teachers, and the community	Spread the reform to others, within and outside the school, so as to align the new norms of the reform within the school and within the norms of supporting institutions, and within communities in association with the school
	Spread the reform so that parents, wh nau and community are engaged in a manner that addresses their aspirations for the education of their children
Leaders develop the capacity of people and systems to produce and use evidence of student experiences and progress to inform change.	Develop the capacity of teachers to identify and continually question their own discursive positioning and theories of action
	Provide professional learning opportunities for teachers that use alternative theories, evidence and vicarious experiences
	Develop and grow systems in their schools that accurately measure student attendance data, stand-downs, suspensions, early-leaving exemptions, retention rates and achievement data for formative and summative purposes
	Develop the capacity of teachers to learn how to both create appropriate evidence for learning and use student evidence to modify their classroom practice
Leaders ensure that the ownership of and responsibility/ authority for the goals of the reform must shift to the school/system.	Identify and take responsibility for the performance of students who are currently not benefiting from their school/system
	Take responsibility for ensuring that the integrity of the means of producing increased achievement gains for the target students (the Cycle Plus and the facilitation teams) is not jeopardised by conflicting and competing interests and agendas
	Take responsibility for building capacity among students, staff and other leaders so that they are able to take responsibility for student outcomes
	Work towards building a school culture that focuses on an ongoing reduction of educational disparities through the raising of student learning and outcomes
	Work to create classrooms, a school culture and an education system in which new situations are addressed from an in-depth understanding of the reform's aims and approaches rather than from past practice.

Source: Bishop et al.2010, pp. 109–111

- A means of gathering and examining evidence to monitor the progress of all students to inform changes in learning and teaching practice; and
- A means whereby teacher and student learning is central to classroom relations and interactions, and teacher learning is based on analyses of patterns of student learning.

GPILSEO at the School Level

At the school level there needs to be:

- A focus on improving all targeted students' achievement across the school;
- A culturally responsive pedagogy of relations developed across all classrooms, which is used to inform relations and interactions at all levels within the school and community;
- Time and space created for the development of new institutions within the school, and structures such as timetables, staffing and organisational structures need to support this reform;
- Leadership that is responsive to the needs of reform, proactive in setting targets and goals, and distributed to allow power sharing;
- A means whereby all staff can join the reform, and parents and community are included;
- A means whereby in-school facilitators, researchers and teachers are able to use appropriate instruments to monitor the implementation of the reform to provide data for formative and summative purposes; and
- A means whereby the whole school, including the board of trustees, can take ownership of the reform.

Ownership is seen when there has been a culture shift so that teacher learning is central to the school, and when systems, structures and institutions are developed to support teacher learning.

GPILSEO at the System Level

The third level concerns the need for system-wide reform. At this level there needs to be a national policy focus and resource allocation for those least well served by the education systems (Ministry of Education, 2008). This needs to be sufficient to realise the potential of these group members by raising their overall achievement and thereby reducing historical disparities. The reform should provide:

- A means whereby in-service professional learning opportunities and professional development for teachers is on site, ongoing and involves feedback loops, and whereby pre-service teacher education is aligned with in-service professional development so that each supports the other in implementing new culturally responsive pedagogies of relations;

- The development of supportive policies and infrastructure that provide incentives for teachers and the ability to revisit funding so that, for example, salaries for in-school professional developers are incorporated into schools' staffing allocations and schooling organisations to provide ongoing, interactive and embedded reform;
- National-level support and professional development for leaders to promote proactive, responsive and distributed pedagogical leadership models;
- Collaboration between policy funders, researchers and practitioners in an iterative process of interaction, feedback and adaptation;
- National-level support for the production of appropriate evidence that will enable collaborative formative problem solving and decision making that is ongoing and interactive, and from which supportive policies for standards, assessments and the mix of accountability and capacity building grow;
- National-level support for integrated research and professional development that provides data for formative and summative purposes; and
- National ownership of the problem and the provision of sufficient funding and resources to see solutions in a defined period of time, in an ongoing, embedded manner.

This model therefore encompasses the need to address both culturalist (the need to change the culture of the schools) and structuralist (the need to change power and resource allocations within the classrooms and schools that reflect the wider society) concerns at the three levels of classroom, school and system by creating a means of changing the classroom, the culture of the school and the education system itself. Cultural change concerns are addressed through goal setting, the development of appropriate pedagogies in depth, and assuming ownership of the whole reform at each level. Structural concerns are addressed by the development of new institutions, responsive and distributed leadership, the spread of the reform to include all those involved, the development of data management systems within the school to support the reform, and the assumption of ownership by the teachers, school and policy makers of both the cultural and structural changes necessary to reform education to address educational disparities. Structural concerns are also addressed at a system-wide level when schools are supported, at a national level, to implement these structural changes. In this way, this model suggests a way to remove the key contributing factors to the educational disparities that afflict Māori people in Aotearoa/New Zealand and other minoritised peoples in other parts of the world.

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Chapter 59
Same Mother, Different Lives: The Social Organisation of Leadership for Learning Across Three Chinese Societies

Allan Walker and Frank Xue-Ju Wang

Introduction

This chapter compares leadership for learning in mainland China (MC), Hong Kong (HK) and Taiwan (TW) over the past decade. Whereas there are many definitions of leadership for learning (Jacobson and Bezzina 2008) our comparison takes it as a process of dynamic influence. We suggest that leadership for learning flows through an interactive set of relationships among major school stakeholders: principals, teachers, parents and government agencies (Leithwood and Duke 1999). In other words, the leadership that determines school direction and action (or fails to do so) through setting goals, building structures, implementing curriculum, designing pedagogies, instigating policy and driving ideology[1] cannot rest in one person, regardless of the person's organisational status. Rather, leadership is the dynamic that flows from and through ongoing *interactions* between *all* organisational participants, including the principal and other stakeholders.[2]

Building on this assertion we argue that one way to understand leadership for learning in Chinese societies is to study schools and the systems with which they engage through a political lens. A political perspective views a school as a polity,

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[1] The categorisation here is drawn from Bacharach and Mundell (1993).

[2] Yukl (2002, pp. 3–4) notes a central controversy among various definitions of leadership: some view leadership as a "specialised role" occupied by a leader leading others in the group, while others regard leadership as a "shared influence process", where members mutually influence one another and determine what the group does and how to do it. This chapter is more inclined to the latter view.

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and as such focuses on how actors, be they individuals or groups, use power to pursue their interests (Ball 1987; Blase 1991; Hoyle 1986; Iannaccone 1991; Shipps and Kafka 2009).

We build our comparison around political analysis for four main reasons. First, a political perspective is relevant in schools regardless of context because of their contested goals, professional staff and public visibility (Blase and Blase 2002; Hoyle 1986). Second, although sharing certain commonalities, the three Chinese societies are different in many ways – including in how leadership for learning is exercised. One way to understand these differences is to look at how social contexts influence stakeholder power, and in turn, shape leadership for learning. Third, despite the potential contribution of political analysis of leadership for learning, very little work has been done in any Chinese education context. To our knowledge such analysis is very thin within each of the three Chinese societies and even more limited across them (Chen 2002; Hsiao 2000; Jian 2003). Fourth, changes generated by recent educational reforms in the three societies provide rich opportunities for political analysis, and at the same time, argue for its importance (Ball 1987; Lai and Lo 2002; Ng 2007).

The purpose of the chapter is to investigate the link between social context and leadership for learning across three Chinese societies. The comparison aims to deepen understanding of how social context influences leadership for learning in a way not attempted before.[3] The chapter is divided into six sections. Section 'Using a political perspective' explicates the theoretical importance of looking at school organisations through a political perspective. Section 'Framework and approach' constructs a framework for guiding the comparison. Sections 'Comparing social contexts' and 'Comparing leadership for learning' apply the framework to compare social contexts and leadership for learning, respectively, in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Section 'Discussion' links the different social contexts with leadership for learning. It shows that even though the three societies share a common Confucian cultural heritage, they differ in many other aspects (Walker et al. 2008). Both similarities and differences influence leadership for learning. The final section 'Conclusion' pulls the chapter together and makes some suggestions for future research.

Using a Political Perspective

This section briefly outlines the usefulness of adopting a political perspective to understand leadership for learning in schools. It should be noted that the perspectives outlined originate mainly from Anglo-American contexts. As such they may lack a certain amount of explanatory power within and across the three Chinese societies (Dimmock and Walker 2000). Their use does not imply that there is no discussion of organisational politics in Chinese contexts (Feng 2005; Wu and Yan 2007).

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[3] Some work compare two of the three. For example, Lai and Lo (2002) compare Taiwan with Hong Kong while Chan (2003) compares mainland China with Hong Kong.

However, there is little formal empirical work or organised debate readily available in the literature, especially as it relates to schools.

A political perspective views an organisation as a polity and asks how this determines its policies, and how these interact with the interests of different stakeholders. Stakeholders are the constituencies of the polity and as such possess and mobilise their power to influence organisational life (Ball 1987; Blase 1991; Hoyle 1986; Iannaccone 1991). The political perspective argues that, by nature, schools and indeed all organisations are unavoidably political entities. To fully understand how they work, therefore, they must be viewed as such (Clegg et al. 2006; Morgan 1986). Three basic arguments support the importance of the political perspective.

First, a political perspective gets to the volatile heart of organisational life. Organisations exist only as a result of people coming together to pursue interests (Ball 1987, 1994). This exposes important questions such as: Who is competing and for what particular interest? How are they competing (or collaborating)? What do their patterns of interaction look like? What implications do these hold for organisational performance, effectiveness or happiness? In short, a political perspective poses questions fundamental to organisational existence and operation (Iannaccone 1991; Perrow 1986).

Second, a political perspective questions how and why organisations create interdependence. This produces a need to understand the interplay between control and influence and associated tactics (Brass 2002; Pfeffer 1981, 1992). As such, it highlights the reality that one person or group's interests depend on the action or inaction of others (Giddens 1984). Thus, organisations seek to control their members as these same members seek to influence the organisation and each other (Hoy and Miskel 2008; Perrow 1986; Scott 2003).

Third, a political perspective provides insights into how organisations work within endemic uncertainty and bounded rationality (Bacharach and Mundell 1993; Thompson 1967).

> The combination of uncertainty and bounded rationality (the fact that cognitive processing limits make it impossible for any individual to make purely rational decisions on the basis of complete information) makes it difficult to specify goals and the means to achieve them. Because of this, the selection of goals, means and the cognitive logic that links them can easily become the source of political activity within organisations (Bacharach and Mundell 1993, p. 427).

Two key features of schools make them especially open to political analysis (Ball 1987; Hoyle 1986; Hoyle and Wallace 2005; Malen 1995).

The first is the structural looseness that accompanies high levels of teacher autonomy (Bidwell 1965; Hoy and Miskel 2008; Weick 1976). High levels of discretion leave room for resistance. School leaders are therefore faced with complex issues of control (Hoyle 1986; Kelchtermans 2007).

> The teacher works alone within the classroom, relatively hidden from colleagues and superiors, so that he has a broad discretionary jurisdiction within the boundaries of the classroom (Bidwell 1965, p. 976).

The second feature is the ambiguous nature of schools, especially in terms of their educative and social purposes, and the diverse values which flow through them

(Ball 1987; Hoyle and Wallace 2005). Schools operate with multiple yet poorly defined goals and technologies. Unlike many other organisations, schools are open to multiple sources of control: the bureaucratic authority of government, the professional authority of teachers, and lay authority in the community (Ball 1987; Bidwell 1965). As normative institutions, schools are rife for ideological dispute, the intensity and diversity of which are uncommon in many other organisations (Ball 1987; Hoyle and Wallace 2005). Ambiguities in terms of control, purpose and means induce and even encourage participants to use politics to promote or defend their ideological and pragmatic postures.

In sum, a political perspective is critical if we are to understand organisations in general, and schools and school leadership, in particular.[4] The next section outlines the simple framework designed to guide analysis, data used and the method employed.

Framework and Approach

The Framework

The analytic framework is shown in Fig. 59.1. At the core of the framework are the important stakeholders: principals, teachers, parents and the government.[5] The relationship among these stakeholders is important in that it plays a major role in shaping what and how students learn. It thus defines leadership for learning. In our framework, the principal, the senior leadership team and the teachers are located within the inner circle (the school). These groups oversee and drive learning; they are the 'nuts and bolts' of the organisation. Parents and the government are positioned across the school boundary. They are therefore involved in learning and life at different levels and to varying degrees depending on multiple factors. For example, the government makes policy and 'polices' schools, while parents may serve as volunteers, serve on governance committees and 'police' their children's progress and happiness.

Interactions between stakeholders constitute a dynamic system (as shown by the rectangle in Fig. 59.1). This interaction is embedded within broader social contexts that include political, economic, institutional and cultural dimensions. In this chapter we use the term 'institutional' to refer to the procedures, levels and forms of participation between different stakeholders seeking influence.[6] The purpose of

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[4] More generally, as Yukl (2002) points out, while various definitions of leadership have little in common, most of them assume that leadership involves intentional influence. Thus, leadership can be productively analyzed with a political lens, which takes intentional influence as its core object.

[5] Admittedly, they are not the only stakeholders. For example, in many mainland China schools, Party Chapter secretaries play important roles (Lin 2000). However, focusing on the stakeholders included here facilitates comparison among the three societies on one hand, and fulfills our purpose of illustrating the value of political analysis on the other.

[6] See Scott (2008) for a broader definition of 'institution'.
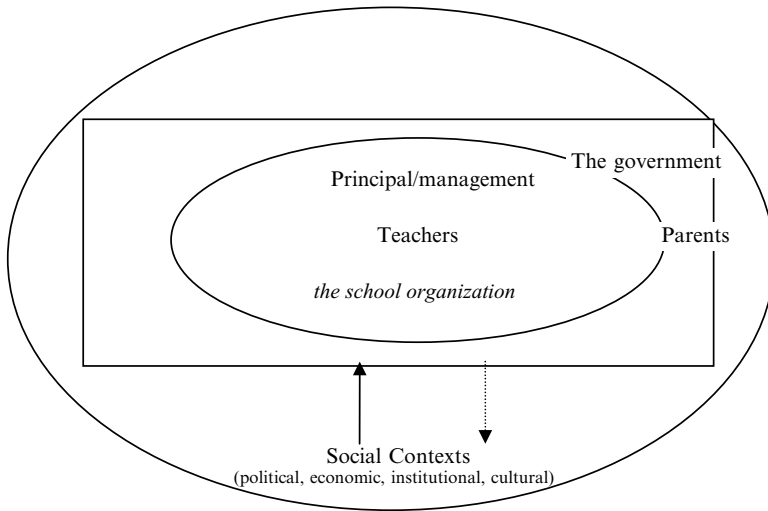
Fig. 59.1 Comparison framework

situating leadership for learning within its social contexts is to understand how and why it is enacted the way it is.

Human interaction does not occur in a vacuum, but within specific contexts. These apparently stable social contexts may hold significant implications for relationships between different stakeholder groups (Cheng and Walker 2008; Dimmock and Walker 2005; Moos et al. 2008). The interplay between social context and stakeholders constitutes the larger system represented by the outer circle. In this chapter we compare how contexts influence leadership for learning in three different Chinese societies. These contexts share a number of commonalities but also differ in important ways.

The Literature

In order to examine how social contexts impact leadership for learning in the three societies, we reviewed English and Chinese literature relevant to the topic. Our review did not intend to be exhaustive but representative, with a focus on delineating patterns and themes. Therefore, we turned to the major educational article databases covering most of the quality journals. The international databases we used included Sage, ERIC, Education Full Text and Educational Management Abstracts. The local databases covering Chinese journals were China Journal Net (based in mainland China), HKInChip (based in Hong Kong) and Taiwan Electronic Periodical Services (TEPS) and Article Database of Republic of China (*zhonghua minguo qikan lunwen ziliaoku*) (based in Taiwan).

We also identified dissertations and books in relevant databases of either language (i.e. WanFang Data Chinese Dissertations Database for mainland China, Dissertations and Theses @ CUHK and HKU theses online for Hong Kong, and National Dissertations and Theses Services (*quanguo boshuoshi lunwen zixunwang*) for Taiwan, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses and Hong Kong Academic Library Link (HKALL). HKALL lists books in all Hong Kong university libraries and offers an extensive coverage, of the three Chinese societies.

The Keywords and Timeframe

To identify the most relevant pieces we searched using the following keywords, 'leadership/management/administration (*lingdao/ guanli/xingzheng*)', 'school/education (*xuexiao/jiaoyu*)' and 'Taiwan/Hong Kong/China (*Taiwan/Xianggang/Zhongguo*)'. Since our comparison took a political perspective, we also used keywords, 'power/politics/micropolitics/political/micropolitical (*quanli/zhengzhi/weiguan zhengzhi/zhengzhi de/weiguan zhengzhi de*)'. To make the search manageable, and also put it in line with recent education reforms we restricted our timeframe to pieces published between 1995 and 2010.

The Process

When the sources were identified and collected we reviewed them and highlighted similarities and differences between the social contexts and leadership for learning across the three societies. We then attempted to identify how social contexts impact leadership for learning. To do this we interpreted and connected the similarities and differences between social contexts (in each society) with leadership for learning.

Comparing Social Contexts

This section compares social contexts across the three societies; the next section compares leadership for learning.[7] Table 59.1 summarises the basic comparison (similarities and differences) and supports these with illustrative references. While we break social contexts into different dimensions for the purpose of discussion, we acknowledge that these dimensions are inherently related.

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[7] What we attempt here is only to sketch a rough picture of social contexts of the three societies. For more discussion, see Y. C. Cheng (2003, 2005), Lai and Lo (2002), Lin (2005), Lo and Gu (2008), Lo and Lai (2004), Mok (2007), Ng (2007), Yu (2005).

Table 59.1 Summary of comparison results

	Political	Economic	Institutional	Cultural
Similarities in social contexts				
	All had a history of authoritarian rule and central control	Global competition		Strong Confucian heritage (hierarchy, harmony, emphasis on education, respect teachers) (Dimmock 2003; Koo et al. 2003)
	All have been pushing reforms centring on quality (Mok 2007; Qian 2009)	Government as the main financial source		
Differences in social contexts				
MC	Communist Party ruled for 60 years	Under-funded (Qian 2009; Scott 2001)	Teacher-staff representative meeting (Wong 2006)	
HK	Post-colonial SAR with limited democracy and disarticulated political system (Morris 2004) Colonial legacy of non-interventionism and cynicism toward reforms (Morris and Scott 2003)	Majority of schools are funded by government but run by private bodies	Atomistic (groups of) schools (Walker 2004) PTAs/parent associations	
TW	Democratisation since 1987 Deeper democratisation than HK (Law 2004)		Teacher evaluation committee Principal selection committee Teacher association at school, local, and national levels Parent association (Lo and Gu 2008; Wu and Lai 2006)	
	Government/Education Bureaus	Principal/senior management	Teachers	Parents

Table 59.1 (continued)

	Political	Economic	Institutional	Cultural
Similarities in leadership for learning				
	Promote decentralisation but still retain or increase control through monitoring and regulations (Lo and Lai 2004; Wong 2007)	Major decision-maker in schools (Cheng and Chan 2000; Zhang 2006)	Limited participation in management and policy making (Wan 2005) Limited professional autonomy (Lai and Lo 2007)	Overall limited participation (Pang et al. 2003)
Differences in leadership for learning				
MC	Control textbook, finance, principal and teacher hiring (Lin 2000; Lo and Lai 2004) Ideological control through party secretary in schools	Upward accountability (Feng 2005; Qian 2009) Seeking resources Enjoy discretion over school business income	Follow state directives (Lai and Lo 2007)	Little participation in management. Some schools hold parent meetings on an irregular basis. Parents informed about the learning but seldom involved in
HK	Reform met more resistance from school sponsoring bodies (Pang 2004; Yu 2005)	Principal selected by SSB, then responsible to hire, evaluate and promote teachers (Lai and Lo 2002) Listening more to teachers and parents (Dimmock and Walker 2005)	Voice more complaints and protest (Lai and Lo 2007) Do not simply follow policies Young teachers challenge authority (Cheung 2000)	More participation met resistance from school professionals (Ho and Tsoi 2001; Pang et al. 2003) Increased communication with schools due to school marketing
TW	Control textbook, finance, principal hiring Detailed control through laws and regulations regarding performance	Power weakened while responsibility increased by reforms (Lin 2005)	Taking part in management mainly happens through selecting teachers (Lai and Lo 2002)	More actively participate in school management through selecting principals and teachers and

Contextual Similarities

'Quality' Reforms

All three societies are in the throes of wide-ranging education reform focused squarely on improving 'quality'. These reform initiatives top the various policy agendas. Each society explicitly has linked education quality to economic productivity (Walker 2003).

Education is therefore perceived as critical to enhanced global competitiveness. For example, in 1999, the MC government issued *Decisions on Deepening Education Reform and Promoting Quality Education in an All-round Way* (Chinese Communist Party Central Committee (CCPCC), 1999). The document further strengthened the quality rhetoric evident in previous policy documents by introducing radical curriculum reform. The policy emphasised student-centred classroom practice, 'innovative spirit' and practical skills. All aimed to revise test-oriented rote learning, and cultivate quality students (Qian 2009; Walker et al. 2008). Similarly, under the Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum reform in Taiwan (Lin 2005), schools were allowed to develop 20% of the curriculum, within the broad framework provided by the central government (Walker et al. 2008).

Hong Kong enacted numerous reforms to improve school quality (Dimmock 2000; Mok 2007; Yu 2005). Education Commission Report 7 (ECR 7) began the trend, which has continued unabated almost ever since (Education Commission 1997). The report suggested schools measure quality using value-added measures, and that a 'Quality Development Grant' be introduced to fund quality improvement projects. Related reforms targeted school governance structures through mandating School-Based Management (SBM), largely through involving parents, teachers and other stakeholders in school management. Other reforms targeted school-based curriculum (Curriculum Development Council (CDC), 2001), teacher and principal professional development (Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) 2003; Education Department 2002) and promoting ICT (Law 2004). The decade has seen so many reforms instituted within such a relatively small time they have oft been criticised as constituting a 'reform syndrome' (Cheng 2008, cited in Cheng and Walker 2008).

Other reform bundles across the societies also provide schools with more flexibility to redesign their organisational structures to improve student learning, enhance student creativity, and change high school admission systems and recruitment mechanisms for principals and teachers (Chen 2008; Lo and Gu 2008; Wu and Lai 2006).

Confucian Heritage

A second and much longer-standing contextual similarity across the three societies is that they share a dominant Confucian cultural heritage. While acknowledging that Confucian heritage is not the only cultural factor at play, scholars have attested

to its prominent role in the Chinese societies (Dimmock 2003; Koo et al. 2003; L. C. Wu 2004). While Confucian culture itself has been influenced by other factors,[8] certain common elements appear deeply entrenched (Cheung 2000; Qian 2009; Walker 2004). We briefly discuss some of the elements that appear particularly pertinent to the social context as it plays out in schools.[9]

One element is the respect held for seniority and age. This means that people occupying lower social positions generally comply with those in higher positions, at least superficially. Translated into schools, hierarchy pressures teachers to follow their principal's edicts, sometimes blindly. Another element is harmony. This stresses the importance of smooth relationships and is built on the basis of reciprocal obligation. According to this norm, people tend to avoid public conflict and reconcile their different stances in a polite and private way. A further element is opportunities for upward mobility through high academic achievement (Cleverley 1991). Since schools and teachers are instrumental to success, they are held in high regard by parents (L. C. Wu 2004).

Contextual Divergence

Political Systems

The three societies have quite different political systems. While in MC the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has ruled since 1949, both HK and Taiwan have experienced political transformation. Before 1997 Hong Kong was a British colony whose governor was appointed by a British colonial government that largely adopted a non-interventionist approach to minimise conflict with the local community (Morris and Scott 2003; Walker 2004). In 1997, Hong Kong was returned to the People's Republic of China and became a Special Administrative Region (SAR), with its Chief Executive elected by a small group of Hong Kong's elite.

Taiwan has recently pursued a more democratic form of government, but this was not the case in its formative years (Law 2004; Lo and Gu 2008; Pan and Yu 1999). After World War II, the Kuomintang (KMT) assumed control of the Island state. To ensure order and prevent the penetration of communism, the KMT government imposed strict control. The situation gradually changed during the 1980s. In 1987, the government rescinded the 38-year-old martial law. With political deregulation, democratic forces grew and contested traditional authority. In 2000, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) peacefully replaced the KMT government. Taiwan today is a democracy that elects a president, local chiefs and members of the various legislative bodies.

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[8] For example, Cheung (2000) notes that while Hong Kong is traditionally characterised by big power-distance (Hofstede 1991) between subordinates and superiors, this power-distance is narrowing as the young generation gets influenced by western egalitarian ideals.

[9] For further references on Chinese culture, see Walker (2004), p. 92, note 10.

Institutional Contexts

Schools in the three societies work in different institutional contexts. Taiwan and Hong Kong have established a variety of institutional arrangements to ensure the representation of teachers and parents in important school decisions. In Taiwan, these arrangements include teacher associations at the school, local and national levels (Lo and Gu 2008). In schools, teacher evaluation committees and, to a somewhat lesser extent, parents are heavily involved in the recruitment of teachers. Principal selection committees arranged by local government also include teacher and parent representatives (Wu and Lai 2006).

In Hong Kong, almost all schools have established parent associations to facilitate the involvement of parents in school operation (Yu 2005). As stipulated by the Education (Amendment) Ordinance 2004 (Education and Manpower Bureau 2004), teachers and parents respectively have at least one representative on each school's Incorporated Management Committee (IMC). These committees are responsible for important school decisions (Pang 2004).

Compared with Taiwan and Hong Kong, mainland China remains underdeveloped in terms of formal organisations representing the interests of teachers and parents. Some schools, however, convene Teacher–Staff Representative Meetings on an *ad hoc* basis to approve school plans and policy changes initiated by principals (Wong 2006; Zhang 2006).

School Financing

There are two quite stark differences in terms of school financing. First, many mainland Chinese schools remain under-funded and must generate supplementary income (Qian 2009). This is necessary if principals are to have the flexibility to fund school improvement initiatives. Second, Aided Schools in Hong Kong (the majority of schools) are funded by the government but are run by School Sponsoring Bodies (SSBs). These SSBs are mostly non-profit organisations like church groups. In effect, these schools are 'publicly funded but privately operated institutions' (Walker 2004, p. 82). In Taiwan, spending in public schools is closely administered by local government (Lai and Lo 2002; Lin 2000).

Comparing Leadership for Learning

This section compares leadership for learning across the three societies. Our suggestion is that leadership for learning flows from and through stakeholder interactions. Therefore our comparison of leadership for learning highlights similarities and differences in stakeholder relations over the past decade in the three societies. Two major similarities emerge. The first concerns government-school relations.

Similarities

Government-School Relations

Governments in all three societies have introduced, to varying degrees, decentralisation at the school level. At the same time however, they have moved to retain or increase central control of schools in certain areas (Chan 2003; Lai and Lo 2002; Lin 2000; Lo and Lai 2004; Wong 2007). For example, while they have transferred more responsibility in terms of finance and curriculum, they have imposed regulatory mechanisms to increase their influence over school operation and school accountability.

The trend toward simultaneous centralisation and decentralisation is apparent in Hong Kong's quest to improve 'quality' and its ongoing effect on school leadership. To better match resources with student learning, the government introduced SBM in 1997 (Yu 2005). Principals were granted more autonomy and flexibility in some areas of operation. Schools were permitted to consolidate non-salary expenditure to allocate funding to their own unique needs.

At the same time, the government imposed a series of school accountability mechanisms on principals, one internal (School Self-Evaluation [SSE]) and one external (External School Review [ESR]) (Cheng and Walker 2008; Mok 2007). Principals were required to conduct self-evaluation according to the centrally mandated Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and make the reports public. From 2003 to 2004, the Quality Assurance Division of the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) validated each school's SSE through the ESR. Given the declining birth rate and declining enrolment, this created huge stress on school principals.

Chief Decision-Maker

Despite the increased involvement of teachers and parents in governance there is little doubt that the principal remains the key decision-maker across the three societies (Cheng and Chan 2000; Zhang 2006). This is partly structural but also carries cultural explanations; that is, teachers often remain reluctant to actively join the decision-making process beyond their classrooms (Lai and Lo 2002; Zhong 1998). For example, despite the importance of curriculum for learning and teaching, Taiwanese teachers appear reluctant to write school-based curriculum, and respond passively to requests for involvement (Lin 2004, 2005).

This was also the case in Hong Kong, where Cheng and Chan (2000) reported that even when principals sought increased teacher involvement, teachers resisted (also see Wan 2005). As a Hong Kong principal complained:

> I encourage them to do it (express opinions), but every time in the meeting you'll find that they are so quiet. Unless on your agenda you appoint certain teachers to report something or to share something, they will not speak; otherwise they will listen quite passively throughout the whole process. (a Hong Kong principal, in Dimmock and Walker 2005, p. 128)

When teachers in Hong Kong do participate, they do so in their own way, as a principal noted:

> There's a lot of collaboration, but there's not a lot of interaction between levels. My involvement tends to be with the senior level, but for the lower level, teachers form groups, they collaborate among themselves. These groups then give their opinions to the senior teachers who talk with me… (a Hong Kong principal, in Dimmock and Walker 2005, p. 123)

In Dimmock and Walker's (2005) words, Hong Kong teachers show a pattern of 'hierarchically restricted participation' (p. 123), communicating through intermediaries, often senior teachers, who are trusted and accepted by the principal. While this peculiar form of collaboration allows teachers to express their concerns to some extent, it also maintains the gap between teachers and principals when critical decisions are needed. The same is true of parent involvement (Chen 2002; Pang et al. 2003). In all three societies, principals still hold major control over school-level decisions.

Differences

The three societies exhibit many differences in leadership for learning; stakeholder groups play different roles in different societies. We organise these differences by stakeholder group but refer to other groups as needed to show the interplay between them.

Government

Over the last decade, education reform in Hong Kong has encountered considerable resistance from SSBs. An illustrative example is the SBM reform (Pang 2004; Yu 2005). Initial reform proposals granted considerable power to parents and teachers in school governance. This was strongly opposed by powerful SSBs who forced the government to reduce teacher and parent representation. As Yu (2005) pointed out, on one hand, SSBs were not willing to share real power with teachers and parents, but on the other, they wanted to retain the right to appoint members with like-minded values to their in-school governance structures.

There is little to no evidence of schools openly opposing reform policy in Taiwan or mainland China (Lai and Lo 2002; Lin 2000, 2005; Lo and Lai 2004). In MC, even as schools gain some autonomy, the government retains firm 'final say' control over schools; this is not to be challenged. For example, even though the 1995 *Law of Education* states that schools have the right to recruit, reward and punish teachers, this rarely happens in practice. Despite considerable simmering criticism of recent reform initiatives, principals have at best limited power over

personnel issues (Feng 2005). In a survey of principals in Jiangsu, an eastern province, not one principal believed he or she had the autonomy to recruit or fire teachers (Z. X. Cheng 2005).[10]

Principals

A further difference between Hong Kong and Mainland principals is that the latter group displays 'upward accountability' (Qian 2009). This means that mainland Chinese principals are very aware of what district and provincial officials want. Their actions appear driven first and foremost by the edicts as well as the more subtle intentions of their superiors. This has the effect of marginalising voices within the school. While most schools hold Teacher–Staff Representative Meetings, these are largely symbolic (Lo and Lai 2004; Zhang 2006). Teachers know that they are expected to 'pass' the decisions that have already been made. By comparison, Hong Kong and Taiwanese principals appear to give more credence to teachers' opinions. For instance, Dimmock and Walker (2005) noted that Hong Kong principals appear to be becoming more participative, and open to input from teachers and parents.

> When I first became a principal you were the most influential person; you were like the head of a big family. A bit of a despot – but now you can't really be like that. (a Hong Kong principal, in Dimmock and Walker 2005, p. 122)

Similarly, Cheung (2000) suggested that Hong Kong principals are now more attentive to the opinions of teachers, many of whom embrace western ideals such as democracy. The situation in Taiwan echoes that of Hong Kong's (Lin 2005; Wu and Lai 2006). As Lin (2005) suggests, Taiwanese principals have to deal carefully with challenges from teacher associations, and are 'forced' to work in 'non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian ways' (p. 82).

> The teacher's association is against this idea of a major change in this school. It was the policy mandating the school to change. However, the teachers' association was not satisfied and I had meetings with the association over and over again… (a Taiwanese principal, quoted in Lin 2005, p. 67)

Teachers

Teachers in Hong Kong and Taiwan appear more likely to speak their minds than mainland Chinese teachers. Lai and Lo (2007) compared teacher professionalism in Hong Kong and Shanghai, a modern mainland city. They found that while teachers in both sites practiced 'confined professionalism', Shanghai teachers had a

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[10] This does not mean that Taiwan and mainland China schools completely follow government policies. Research (Lin 2005) has documented the various ways schools 'work around' government orders.

lower degree of professional autonomy. Largely restricted by state directives and management expectations, Shanghai teachers enjoyed little discretion in classroom teaching, let alone the right to take part in school decision making.

Unlike Shanghai teachers, their Hong Kong colleagues are more willing to express their concerns about government policies. In practice, many reject reform mandates they see as inappropriate to improved student learning. In fact, both Taiwanese and Hong Kong teachers have at times staged large scale protests to have their voices heard (L. C. Wu 2004).

Teachers in Hong Kong and Taiwan also seem to participate more in their school's internal management than teachers in mainland China. While studies show that teachers in mainland China have relatively few opportunities to be part of school decision-making (Feng 2005), Taiwanese teachers hold more sway in school management, particularly on decisions related to recruitment and learning and teaching (Fan 2005, cited in Wu and Yan 2007; Lai and Lo 2002). In Hong Kong, principals have also witnessed increasing teacher participation:

> I think people are more willing to speak up, especially in a small team setting, like the administrative team… and when I invite teachers to complete a self-evaluation form they are quite frank about what they don't like about the school; they are not just saying things to please you. (a secondary principal, in Dimmock and Walker 2005, p. 128)

This is not to claim that involvement in school decisions is as developed as in many Western societies; it still appears bounded by traditional norms such as hierarchy and the need for harmony. Dimmock and Walker (2005) highlighted the pattern of teacher participation in Hong Kong:

> The move from quietly accepting what the principal says to at least having some input is a slow one, and seems more advanced in secondary than primary schools and among younger than more experienced teachers. (Dimmock and Walker 2005, p. 130).

Parents

The roles of parents in school-wide affairs seem to mirror those of teachers across the societies. Parents in Hong Kong and Taiwan participate more in schools than parents in mainland China. Parental involvement in schools in mainland China remains at a very initial stage (Hao 2009; Shi and Li 2009). While some schools hold parent meetings on an irregular basis, such meetings are generally used only to inform parents about the learning of their children. As passive recipients, parents seldom get involved in leadership for learning.

In Hong Kong, parent participation in schools has been advocated since the early 1990s. In 2004 this was enshrined in the Education (Amendment) Ordinance 2004 (Education and Manpower Bureau 2004). The Bill granted parents representation on IMCs. Almost all Hong Kong schools now have parent or parent–teacher associations, a definite change from the home-focused role parents played only a decade ago (Ng 2007; Pang 2004; Yu 2005). However, this situation should not be exaggerated; like teachers, most parents remain reluctant to question school decisions

even though they remain extremely interested in their children's education
(Ng 1999). This may be related to the fact that schools themselves do not welcome
too much untoward parental involvement in important decisions (Ho and Tsoi
2001; Pang et al. 2003).

The situation is somewhat different in Taiwan where parents use their
representation on teacher evaluation and principal selection committees to voice
their concerns (Lai and Lo 2002; Wu and Lai 2006). In fact, in some schools par-
ents even attempt to influence classroom teaching to ensure the success of their
children in high stake tests (Lin 2005). Possibly in reaction to this situation,
principals in a survey express their wish that parents 'participate but not interfere'
(Lin 1998, p. 174).

Discussion

Leadership for learning involves the process whereby stakeholders influence one
another to set conditions for student learning. This section explores what can be
gleaned from the comparisons in relation to leadership for learning. The first of
these relates to the place of traditional culture, and the remainder to more defined
relationships between stakeholders. Although the present state of knowledge does
not allow us to comment on the specificities of leadership for learning across the
societies, our analysis shows the interdependence of social context and leadership
across the Chinese societies. Further study can provide the in-school perspective
needed to tell us what these look like and highlight the value of political analysis
for understanding leadership for learning.

Traditional culture still influences how leadership in schools is conceptualised
and exercised. Despite some movement to the contrary, societal culture continues
to influence leadership for learning. This influence appears to be evident across the
three societies. For example, the limited participation of teachers across the societ-
ies may indicate the influence of cultural factors like hierarchy, harmony and face.
As Dimmock and Walker (2005) noted, Hong Kong teachers trusted intermediaries
to express concerns, rather than state them directly. As principals in their study
explained, this pattern of 'hierarchically restricted participation' (Dimmock and
Walker 2005, p. 123) suits a Confucian-type mindset. It avoids 'open' conflict
between teachers and the principal, shows respect for superiors and thus maintains
school harmony, at least in public. Through using intermediaries and restraining
opinions in meetings, teachers do not have their opinions publicly rejected by the
principal and so 'lose face', but they will get their opinions into the mix.

By the same token, the reluctance of parents to become school managers in some
schools in Hong Kong indicates their respect and trust of the established profes-
sional order (Cheng 1995; Ng 1999). This is expected according to Confucian heri-
tage, which emphasises the value of education and in turn the high status of formal
educators.

However, the cultural influence on the dynamics of leadership should not be
over-played. Given that the three societies share a general set of Confucian values,

comparison of leadership for learning with other cultures is needed to substantiate the role of culture in shaping relationships. For example, this could be addressed by comparing Chinese societies with societies characterised by lower power-distance. This may shed further light on if and how respect for hierarchy impacts the degree and form of teacher participation.[11]

The relationship between government and principals influences discretion to lead learning in the school. For example, principals in Hong Kong have more discretion to influence the impact of education reform in their classrooms than do their colleagues in mainland China and Taiwan (Pang 2004). This is understandable when one considers how much power schools as organisations have in each of the societies. Hong Kong principals have more 'say' because they have operated historically as independent entities facing limited government intervention (Morris and Scott 2003; Walker 2004). Their colonial legacy has granted them more autonomy as well as suspicion of government-initiated reforms.[12]

Therefore, large SSBs can openly oppose the government's will. The situation in mainland China and Taiwan is very different, as both have a long history of rigid control by authoritarian governments (e.g., Bush et al. 1998; Lai and Lo 2002; Lin 2000). To maintain control, the governments in China and Taiwan generally treat schools as an administrative arm to impose almost pedantic control over schools. With limited power, principals find it difficult to enter relationships with other agencies on an equal footing. They therefore have difficulty openly opposing government directives. The following quotations highlight the difference between Hong Kong and mainland China in terms of power relations with government.

> …the majority of schools have operated largely independent of direct government control. This has left much of the power for internal operation to SSBs and school principals operating in fragmented individual or collective entities that have developed mechanisms and cultures that buffer how they do things from undue outside interference. (Walker 2004, p. 81, discussing Hong Kong schools)

> School's power? What are you talking about? Even if you want to buy a pencil or a notebook, you have to go to the place designated by Bureau of Education. Our school is a core primary school in the county. Many of our teachers are family members or relatives of government officials. What a hard thing it is to fire an unqualified teacher! (Qiao 2003, p. 261, quoting a principal in mainland China).

Relationships between parents and principals influence leadership for learning in their schools. Compared with mainland Chinese parents, Taiwanese parents are actively involved in school affairs (Lin 2005). Differences in power relations are quite apparent. Notably, Taiwanese parents enjoy greater power in school-level

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[11] Cultural influence is not the focus of this paper and is thus only briefly discussed here. For more discussion of how culture may shape leadership for learning, see, e.g., Cheng (2000b), Dimmock and Walker (2005), and Walker (2004).

[12] In Morris and Scott's (2003) words, 'a major barrier to the implementation of the current educational reforms is a long-standing culture, a mixture of inertia and cynicism, that was established during the colonial period and which continues' (p. 78).

decision making. Unlike their mainland China counterparts who lack institutionalised channels to express their concerns, Taiwanese parents are represented on teacher evaluation and principal selection committees (Lo and Gu 2008). They can also more effectively cooperate with each other through formal associations, and therefore exert influence as collective groups. Taken together, representation in critical school personnel decisions and avenues for cohesive influence offer Taiwan parents more power to voice their opinions.[13] They can therefore exert more influence on curricular and other decisions overseen by principals than can their counterparts in HK and MC.

Relationships between teachers and principals influence the process of leadership for learning across the three societies. Principals in Taiwan 'listen' more to teachers' voices than do principals in mainland China (Lin 2005). Taiwanese teachers can influence leadership appointment processes and outcomes through participating in principal selection committees. As such, they evaluate leaders' performance and have a say every four years as to whether the principals can be reappointed (Lin 2005). By contrast, mainland Chinese teachers have no say in principal selection; their principals are hand-picked by local government (Wong 2007).

While Taiwanese teachers enjoy certain legislated benefits from the state (Lin 2005), mainland teachers rely on principals for any performance-based bonus. Principals can allocate these from a schools' entrepreneurial income base (Lin 2000; Wong 2007). Given the rising living cost in mainland China, the bonus has become an important incentive for teachers to comply with their principals' directives and suggestions and thus influences how principals exercise influence over learning and teaching.[14]

Our very initial analysis confirms that leadership for learning is unavoidably influenced by the social context of schools. The basic argument is that reforms generate change, which in turn has the potential to disturb the established order and so invite new interpretations and political action within schools. In the three societies compared, we identified numerous changes driven by education reforms. As one Hong Kong principal noted,

> Operating in such fluid social, political and cultural contexts, being a school principal is like being caught in a whirl-pool of change. (Cheung 2000, p. 227)

Changes have the potential to expose the politics that are too-often obscured by daily routines. Change gives rise to political action. For example, scholars note that bringing parents into school-level decision making in Hong Kong and Taiwan may increase conflict (Lai and Lo 2002; Ng 2007). Indeed, Hong (1999, cited in

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[13] Lin (2005, pp. 86–87) notes a possible link between Taiwan's democratic environment and parent involvement in school management: with democratic progress, Taiwan parents get more politically mobilised and more actively exert their voices in schooling.

[14] Like Taiwan principals, Hong Kong principals also have limited material incentives to offer to teachers. Cheng (2000a) mentions the rigid salary structure of Hong Kong teachers and the limited promotion opportunity for them. See Wong and Wong (2005) for more discussion on the personnel management of teachers in Hong Kong.

Chen 2002) showed that in Taiwan teachers and parents hold significantly different views on the extent to which parents should influence school decisions through aggressive lobbying. Another example is the principal selection process in Taiwan. C. S. Wu (2004, cited in Wu and Lai 2006) found that involving multiple parties in decision processes was accompanied by more power struggles in some schools.

Through applying a political lens, researchers can acquire fresh understanding about leadership for learning. Although this perspective may fall outside more pedagogically focused approaches, it has the potential to provide realistic insights into what is happening in schools and why it is happening. This in turn can aid understanding of ways leaders can influence student learning.

Conclusion

While our work tries to unravel how social contexts shape leadership for learning, it is undoubtedly a very preliminary effort. This is unavoidable at this stage given the complexity of the issue and the limited evidence presently available. As such, the chapter claims to be no more than an initial investigation, although one that we hope will add to the developing knowledge base of leadership for learning in Chinese societies and highlight the usefulness of using a political perspective. More general cautions about conducting research across cultures also apply to this work (See Walker 2003).

Further research that is needed in this area might usefully include study of how culture shapes power plays in school settings. For example, respect for hierarchy and harmony are seen as preventing teachers from confronting issues in schools (Walker 2004). More work is needed into why this is so, and whether it has positive or negative effects on student learning.

Few studies touch upon the issue of how school stakeholders utilise or challenge culture to enhance their power and influence. For example, Wong (2007) showed how a Shanghai principal knowledgeable in the intricacies of culture used his official position to promote reform measures and enhance student learning. Likewise, Dimmock and Walker (2005) showed how Hong Kong teachers leveraged trusted intermediaries, often middle leaders, to express their complaints and ideas. These teachers exerted influence by turning to paths acceptable in their dominant culture. Understandably, to unravel such delicate dynamics, careful case studies are required.

In this chapter we have attempted to demonstrate the value of using a political analysis to compare leadership for learning across three Chinese societies. Given the potential of political analysis, the lack of its development in Chinese societies and the abundant research opportunities therein, this chapter suggests that such a perspective is useful for understanding the context and exercise of leadership for learning.[15]

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[15] Similarly, Cheng (2002) notes that as more parties participate in school operation, researchers need to re-conceptualise school community as including multiple constituencies like parents, teachers, school management board, and government authority.

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Chapter 60
Assessing and Understanding Quality in the Arab Region

Ekhleif Tarawneh

Introduction

The idea of quality is not new, nor is that of quality assurance (QA) in higher education, and this has been of great concern to decision makers throughout the world. The quality of a state's higher education sector is not only key to its social and economic well-being, but it is also a determining element affecting the status of that higher education system at the global level.

Higher education has faced the sustained challenge of rapid change. This is particularly due to an accelerating progress in global concepts, mostly in information and communication technology, but also in the expansion in student numbers and diversity and the move to a "Knowledge Society." Similarly, higher education emerged from a period of massification and substantial change, and towards the challenge of grappling with universal provision to even more diverse students with a range of different abilities and aspirations. Institutions and academics needed to respond to this rapid transformation towards an increasingly networked "Knowledge Society."

Globally, there has been a move towards mass higher education, associated with a greater diversity of institutions and programs as well as the increase in the number and size of universities. These developments pose challenges for the efficacy of institutional quality controls. In addition to the changes impacting the higher education sector referred to above, other new pressures are emerging, both nationally and internationally. In this context, knowledge has emerged as an economic commodity which has in turn placed pressure on existing national systems to ensure they are placed competitively in the international marketplace. This led to moves in developed

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countries towards having rigorous, internationally recognized higher education QA processes. In response, many countries have taken steps to establish mechanisms for QA in higher education, and quality became a key word in the public debate about higher education. Although much has been written about quality assessment in the context of higher education, it is difficult to locate research papers dealing directly with how quality is assessed and understood in the Arab Region.

In this chapter, I shall make first some preliminary interpretations about the meaning of quality, quality assessment, quality understanding, quality principles, and basic concepts used in the assessment of quality, second, I will examine the assessment and understanding of quality in the Arab Region, and in Jordan in particular, and the third part of this chapter will present some conclusions about quality assessment in the Arab Region.

Quality

Quality is not something "per se" but always is associated with certain elements and is related to the evaluation of the efficacy of these elements. The quality of higher education, or more precisely, the perception of quality is determined by various factors:

1. The changing perception of society to teaching and learning.
2. The social expectation towards the graduate of higher education institutions.
3. Balance between the research and studies in the establishments of higher education, activities, and management of higher education.
4. Structure and context of study programs.
5. Implementation of the study process.
6. Study conditions.
7. Satisfying the needs of students (Harvey 2002).

The researchers note that the perception of quality is based on the perspective of various stakeholders: the academic community and its disciplinary bodies, students as consumers, employers, professionals, governmental bodies, or the wider community (Barnett 1994; Houston 2007).

Each of the stakeholder groups (and even groups within those groups) may have different interests in higher education and related quality expectations. Harvey and Green (as cited in Woodhouse 2006) list five different approaches to quality in the field of higher education. They are as follows:

1. *In terms of the exceptional (highest standards)*: a traditional notion which is bound with the concept of providing a product or service that is distinctive and special, and which confers status on the owner or user. Lomas (2002) argues that quality as exceptionality, excellence, sets a goal for universities and academic communities to be always the best; belong to the elite and achieve better outcomes than the others. In his point of view, it can include admitting the best graduates according to specific rankings, as presumably the higher quality of input affects the higher quality of output.

2. *In terms of conformity to standards*: Parri (2006) sees quality as specific standards and defined it as a threshold that the institution should cross in order to certify that the instruction meets the quality standards. Standards help to rationalize the definition of quality, making it more objective.
3. *As effectiveness in achieving institutional goals*: the purposes are determined by the institution. A high quality institution is one that clearly states its mission, goals (high, moderate, or low), how appropriate those goals are, and efficiency in achieving it.
4. *As meeting customers' stated or implied needs*: this approach is based on the view that quality has no meaning except in relation to the purpose of the product or service that may be determined by the institution itself, by the government, or by a group of stakeholders.
5. *As fitness for purpose*: a definition that includes (almost) all the others, and therefore provides an 'organizing principle' for approaches to the achievement and checking of quality. It is, furthermore, a principle that acknowledges the difficulties inherent in defining and achieving quality in complex systems and addresses these in an appropriate way.

Given the difficulties in defining quality in higher education, some commentators have adapted pragmatic approaches (Fig. 60.1).

Quality is thus defined in terms of a range of qualities, with recognitions that an institution may be of high quality in relation to some factors but low quality in relation to others.

The best that can be achieved is to define, as clearly as possible, the criteria used by each interest group when judging quality and for these competing views to be taken into account when assessments of quality are undertaken. The quality of higher education should be approached from the perspective of subjectivity (opinions, particularly feeling, beliefs, and desires).

Generally speaking, quality is a matter of negotiation between the different stakeholders or parties concerned about the expectations and requirements, which is a fitness for the purposes which are most frequently defined in terms of criteria related to academic standards, financial effectiveness, and social usefulness.
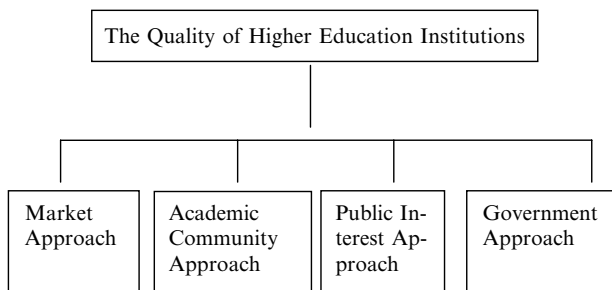
Fig. 60.1 Different approaches to the quality of Higher Education Institutions (Juceuiciene 2009)

Quality Principles

A review of the literature on quality improvement reveals a number of basic quality principles, which are designed to be applicable to higher education institutions irrespective of their structure, function, and size, or the national system in which they are located. The objectives of these principles vary from:

- Encouraging the development of higher education institutions which foster vibrant, intellectual, and educational achievement.
- Providing a source of assistance and guidance to higher education institutions and other relevant agencies in developing their own culture of QA.
- Raising the expectations of higher education institutions, students, employers, and other stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education.
- Contributing to a common frame of reference for the provision of higher education and the assurance of quality within the region.
- Promoting mutual trust and improving transparency while respecting the diversity of national contexts and subject areas.
- Providing a source of assistance and guidance to higher education institutions in developing their own QA systems and agencies undertaking external QA.
- Contributing to a common frame of reference, which can be used by institutions and agencies alike.

However, it is not intended that these standards and guidelines should dictate practice or be interpreted as prescriptive or unchangeable (ENQA 2005). The principles that underpin quality organizations are:

- Vision-, mission-, and outcomes-driven.
- Systems-dependent. Understanding the relationships of the parts of the system greatly improves decision making.
- Leadership that creates and reinforces a quality culture.
- Systematic individual professional development that fit the institution's changing needs.
- Employ decisions based on facts.
- Delegate decision making.
- Ensure collaboration.
- Plan for change. The overall environment of higher education is increasingly changing. The more the institution anticipates change, the more likely it will be capable of meeting the demands of change.
- Require supportive leaders. Leaders must understand the interdependency of the principles and constantly work to see that adequate resources and systems are available to implement them effectively (Woodhouse 2006).

Quality Assessment: Indicators and Models

Quality assessment refers to a structured activity which leads to a judgment of the quality of the teaching/learning process and/or research, whether through self-assessment or assessment by external experts (Vroeuenstun 1995). Quality assessment also refers to long-term work on the development and maintenance of quality. It aims to improve the quality of education or research and is related strictly to the activities of academic staff members for the purpose of bridging the gap caused by the conflict between higher education systems expansion and diminishing unit cost. It also aims to enhance the transparency and comparability of education quality for international communication and co-operation, to monitor higher education institution's performance from a distance, and to provide the information needed for the accountability and accreditation process.

Quality assessment has been initiated in many countries to promote educational reform and improvement (quality assessment and educational improvement are almost always combined) and enhance educational administration. Quality assessment is an instrument used to intensify the governments' macro-management and guidance and to encourage all levels of education administration to support teaching in higher education institutions. At the same time, it can be used to direct higher education institutions to implement the guidance given by the government, such as improving teaching conditions, to ameliorate educational infrastructure, or to strengthen teaching management.

Assessing the expectations and satisfaction of higher education institutions has not been a conventional tool used to measure quality in higher education. Traditionally, a combination of three models has been used: the Input Resource Model, the Superior Output Model, and the Inspection Model.

Input Resource Model: The underlying belief of this model is that the outcomes will be of the highest quality only if the highest quality input materials are used. Higher education has three categories of input resources: *financial* resources, e.g., faculty salaries, large endowments, and low faculty–student ratios; *capital* resources, e.g., computer labs, number of books in the library, or new buildings and *personnel* resources, e.g., staff that have graduated from quality institutions and students with the highest standardized test scores.

Superior Output Model: This model judges quality based on various forms of national recognition. Such judgments could occur from a reputation survey based on past success, on the publishing and research efforts of the faculty, or the number of national or international fellowships awarded to students.

Inspection Model: This model argues that only one standard of quality exists, and the tougher an institution is on judging its students and faculty, the higher its quality. Therefore, it is a badge of honor to have a high failure rate. A faculty member who gives too many high grades is more likely to be judged as lacking rigor than to be seen as an effective teacher. Institutions that award tenure to a high percentage of faculty members are considered as lacking standards rather than having rigorous selection criteria or a nurturing faculty development program (Woodhouse 2006).

The Educational Policy Institute (2008) pointed out other indicators that might be desirable for potential users in constructing various systems of inter-institutional data comparison. The analysis covers a broad category of indicators: Input Indicators, Research Indicators, Teaching and Learning Indicators, Internal Service Indicators, and Output Indicators. In each area, the range of possible indicators is considered, as well as the level at which the data can be reported. While not all indicators included are intended to be measures of quality in their own right, they may help to interpret or normalize other indicators. The number of faculty, for instance, is not a measure of quality but it is necessary in order to interpret data on research productivity.

Basic Concepts Used in the Assessment of Quality

Many higher education institutions have developed their procedures for quality assessment using a variety of terms, such as statistics, indicators, standards, criteria, rubrics, self-evaluation reports, and benchmarks. Often the same term is used by different bodies to denote different understandings or measures. The following provides some explanation of these procedures:

Statistics

Statistics is that branch of mathematics that deals with systematic collection, organization, and analysis of data. It relates to facts and items treated statistically, or collected and organized systematically in order that they can be analyzed.

When collecting data on aspects of institutional functioning or program delivery, these data may come with or without any value addition, and these are building blocks of all value-added specific terms, such as performance indicators.

Indicators

Indicators can be either qualitative or quantitative and they can measure many aspects of quality of an institution or program. *Input* indicators are related to the resources and factors employed to produce an institution's outputs (such as financial resources, physical facilities, student and staff profiles), *process* indicators relate to the ways in which resources and factors are combined and used in order to produce an institution's output (such as management of teaching, research, and services), *output* indicators describe the outputs produced by institutions (such as the products of teaching, research, and services), and *outcomes* indicators consider the effects of outputs (such as employment rates) (UNESCO 2006).

Standards

Standards denote a principle (or measure) to which one conforms (or should conform) and by which one's quality (or fitness) is judged. It also can mean "the degree of excellence required for a particular purpose," and "a thing recognized as a model for imitation" (English and Williamson 2005). There are other contexts in which standards mean "basic" achievement, without any value-added factors, "average quality" or minimum requirements, expressed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Criteria

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) glossary (INQAAHE 2001) defines criteria as "the specification or elements against which a judgment is made." Criteria are seen as the checkpoints, the benchmarks for assessing the quality of both the input and the process. Auditing or assessing the Higher Education Institution (HEI) as a whole is concerned with comparing the actual performance against the benchmark criteria to check quality procedures. The difference between criteria and standards is vital. While criteria indicate the elements or aspects, the standards set the levels required for performance.

Rubrics

Rubrics provide a powerful tool for grading and assessment that can also serve as a transparent and inspiring guide to learning. Rubrics have been used to increase transparency and accountability across higher education. They are also important in encouraging self-reflective learning. In simple terms, a rubric shows how learners will be assessed and/or graded. In formal terms, a scoring rubric is a set of ordered categories to which a given piece of work can be compared. Scoring rubrics specify the qualities or processes that must be exhibited in order for a performance to be assigned a particular evaluative rating, with its four types of rubrics: Holistic, Analytic, General Rubrics, and Task-specific (Ronkowitz and Mullinix 2005).

Self-Evaluation Reports/Self-Study

Self-evaluation is a key element in most evaluation procedures. It provides a standard against which the institution can measure itself and a framework for building up a definition of quality. Thus, it helps to check how far it is achieving its strategic mission and goals, and it allows it to prepare an action plan for further

development. Self-evaluation is carried out by many institutions, though the nature varies significantly. In order to facilitate the process of self-evaluation, practically all institutions provide guidance or manuals, and training (Kohler 2009).

Real quality that is sustainable is quality that is routinely assessed by self. This is how strengths and limitations are best judged. The self-study report required for submission at the time of assessment should be self-critical and reflective, as inspection and quality control imposed from outside may not be as effective. Self-evaluation would be an indicator for continuous improvement and a first step for ensuring quality. It is important to list the objectives behind the self-evaluation process in order to obtain a better understanding of the reasons why the self-evaluation is undertaken. The objectives also determine the content of the process. The prime objective is to establish whether it is possible to improve how the various tasks of a department (academic as well as nonacademic), or academic program involving more than one department, are executed. The second objective is to formulate distinct plans of how improvement can be effected in these areas.

The process of self-evaluation should be approached in a structured way in order not to leave any gaps, and as part of the process staff members in the department or those involved in the program should act as a team, and acquire a sense of ownership in the self-evaluation process. Finally, the process must inform the institution's achievement of its outcomes. The self-evaluation report will furnish it with important management information on the departments or programs.

There is no standardized procedure for conducting a self-evaluation. Many possible approaches exist, and any one of them can be effective as long as the objectives above are kept in mind. The process should take into account existing quality practices in the program. In the case of a nonacademic department, an example would be whether the department undertakes surveys of customer satisfaction. The self-evaluation process must identify these practices, systematize the existing quality processes, and then identify and fill in any existing quality gaps. It should be an ongoing procedure that forms part of a cyclical process to be repeated after a few years. The improvement plans which form part of the output of the self-evaluation process (and are written up in the self-evaluation report) then form part of the input for the next cycle of self-evaluation.

(see https://www.howard.edu/assessment/open/assessmentdocs/What%20is%20 quality.htm)

Conducting a self-evaluation has many benefits, including the following:

- It provides the opportunity to put forward a critical analysis of the relevant institution/faculty, which may form a basis for future development and improvement.
- It is carried out by people in a good position to judge the strengths and weaknesses of the programs.
- It puts forward an overall picture of the institution/faculty (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 2005).

Benchmarks

Benchmarking is a common topic that covers all sectors. What it entails is a process of recognizing "best practices" and measuring an institution's ability to implement them. It is defined as "a continuous systematic process for evaluating the products, services and work processes of organizations that are recognized as representing the best practices for the purpose of organizational improvements" (Mishra 2006). Benchmarking as a process has four main activities:

1. Comparing one thing with the other.
2. Creating and using criteria to evaluate differences between two things and recognizing which is better.
3. Using this experience to identify the direction for change.
4. Implementing the required change for improvement.

In education, it is a relatively new concept and can bring huge benefits in terms of continuous improvement. As it is based on the identification of best practices, it inculcates competition and constant comparison. However, it is also criticized for being a system of imitation. Moreover, something that has produced satisfactory results in one organization, if replicated, may not produce the same results elsewhere. Nevertheless, as we compare ourselves with the best, and follow the actions taken by the best university or college, it provides a tool for motivation to change. By duplicating these practices, other institutions may improve their own quality. Functional benchmarking is a crucial issue, where comparisons are made between higher education institutions which use similar processes and practices.

Similarly, benchmarking is a formal process of learning, a point of reference to make comparisons, as a way of generating ideas for improvement; preferably improvement of a major nature.

Lofstrom (2002) indicates five different types of benchmarking which can be considered in higher education:

1. Internal benchmarking, which is the comparison of performance of different departments or campuses of a higher education institution without necessarily using external standards.
2. External competitive benchmarking, which is the comparison of data on performance in key areas to corresponding data from competing institutions.
3. External collaborative benchmarking, which involves comparisons of performance with several higher education institutions not necessarily competitors.
4. External best-in-class benchmarking is the comparison of performance beyond one's own field, e.g., comparison between a polytechnic and corporate business.
5. Implicit benchmarking, which is a structured, but not systematic comparison of institutions and processes.

Quality Assurance in the Arab Region

In the 1960s, many Arab states faced crucial challenges in developing systems of higher education that would empower their societies to flourish and progress. The attempts to develop such education systems were in accordance with the expansion of higher education which had been the most important single postwar trend worldwide. Arab governments have created many new universities in the last decade. In the 1950s, there were no more than ten universities dispersed across the region, whereas today there are more than 300 higher education institutions. Jordan was the first country in the region to establish a private university. Meanwhile, Arab states have, as never before, witnessed an incredible expansion in enrollment in higher education institutions. This rise has emerged from an increase in public demand for education, an increased population, and the governments' determination to make higher education as accessible as possible.

However, the majority of Arab states were not able to meet the students' needs and ambitions due to a lack of resources to meet the rapid increase in student population. Confirming this, the 1998 Beirut Declaration of the Arab Regional Conference on Higher Education stated:

> Higher education in the Arab States is under considerable strain, due to high rates of population growth and increasing social demand for higher education, which lead states and institutions to increase student enrollment, often without adequate allocated financial resources. Moreover, faced with the challenges of providing flexible enrollment and lifelong learning availability, Arab higher education institutions have not been able to meet the new demands and needs of their societies. Thus, the urgent need for in-depth reform of university structures is evident.

In view of this, the Beirut Declaration calls for the harnessing of modern information and communication technologies to contribute to the provision of courses and degree-awarding programs through multiple and advanced means, thus breaking through the traditional barriers of space and time.

Corresponding to the above statement, higher education should focus on programs that develop conscious-aware, in-depth-thinking, trustworthy, trained, competent, and professionally capable individuals who are able to meet societal needs in nonlimited time and space, provide expertise, critical perspectives, and ethical direction for social advancement. University graduates need to be able to predict social problems and contribute to solving them creatively.

Many sensitive areas were considered to be straining higher education in the region, including high population growth and the massification of secondary education, inadequate financial resources, inflexible and centralized management, lack of diversification of institutions and programs, inability to meet students' needs, the lack of the links between higher education institutions, general and secondary education institutions, local communities, and societal and human development needs (UNESCO 2003).

The Beirut Declaration also identified the need for new teaching and learning skills, methods and processes, and the inclusion of new technologies, focused on the promotion of scientific and analytical thinking skills.

The main recommendations concerned increasing the attempt to provide greater access to higher education for more students, improving the level of postuniversity teaching, reinforcing academic exchanges and links among higher education institutions in the region, thus supporting the free movement of students to provide access to all of the region's universities.

To guarantee and enhance the quality of higher education institutions, various states instituted QA commissions or organizations and initiated new processes, or strengthened the partnership between QA commissions or organizations in other Arab states to enhance QA in tandem with other regional and international QA organizations and networks.

Consequently, the *Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ANQAHE) – an independent, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization – was established. This was an idea generated by some of the experts in QA in the Arab World at a conference organized by the *International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education* (NQAAC) in Cairo in 2004. ANQAHE was launched on the 9th of June, 2007 in Jordan, and aimed to establish mechanism in the Arab region to:

- Exchange information about QA in higher education between Arab States.
- Initiate and sustain regional and international cooperation in QA in higher education by developing standards.
- Disseminate good practice in QA.
- Strengthen the liaison between QA bodies, support and enhance QA organizations in the Arab States.
- Develop the human resources in the field of QA in higher education in the Arab States.

ANQAHE is working in collaboration with the Association of the Arab Universities (AArU) and with the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), to disseminate information, apply good practice, organize seminars, workshops and conferences, exchange expertise, and allow for mutual recognition.

The desire to enhance quality in higher education in the Arab region, the emergence of "globalization" as a concept in the open market, and the rapid appearance of regional QA networks and accreditation networks were the driving forces behind the establishment of ANQAHE.

Major barriers occurred during the establishment of ANQAHE. Some of these barriers included dealing with different education systems; participation on a small scale; different languages and geographic locations; lack of awareness of the QA concepts; lack of financial funds (especially in the foundation period); and finally but not least, the absence of professional QA expertise (Badrawi 2008).

There is still diversity in QA levels in Higher Education systems among the states and not all national QA commissions have approached both the issues of QA and accreditation as a necessary procedure for operating institutions. There is a general lack of documentation; a shaky alliance and links between national QA bodies, both regionally and internationally, and with QA counterparts, because of

their alignment to government. Only a few countries have QA commissions or bodies independent of the ministries of higher education, although in these countries their members are still appointed by the prime minister (for instance, Egypt, Jordan, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and UAE), so governments still have the power to influence the activities of QA in those Arab countries.

In 2009, ANQAHE conducted a survey on QA and accreditation in the Arab Region in order to consider QA organization in the Arab Region against international practice, and the sample of this study included 16 countries. The study revealed that the governance and funding of the external QA in the Arab Region presented a challenge to the autonomy and function of the agencies, but still many of the structures of QA in the Arab Region conformed to international standards (for example, in developing standards, review panels, implementing site visits, and appeal mechanisms).

The ANQAHE study indicated that Arab countries started the process of QA early in the 1990s in the form of licensing and accrediting private higher education institutions. In 2001, a growth spurt in the concept of QA emerged in 15.9% of the studied sample, and 85% of the organizations were considered a commission, an agency, or an authority.

The study indicated that QA and accreditation, quality enhancement, and development of standards or benchmarking are characteristic functions in 85% of the QA agencies of the Arab countries, and the majority (69.2%) have a mandatory process for accreditation while 23.1% consider this a voluntary process.

Evaluation of institutions by external QA agencies occurs in 84% of the Arab countries and is based mainly on predetermined qualitative criteria/standards. The study also indicated that 38.5% of the Arab states require and depend on both a self-evaluation report and a peer evaluation while the rest do not have such a system, and only 30.8% of the Arab countries reported that program assessment is mandatory for public higher education institutions. The establishment of internal QA procedures (systems) in all higher education institutions was reported by only 16% of the Arab countries while 23% reported that many of its higher education institutions have only the internal QA in place. However, 45% of higher education institutions have few internal QA procedures.

In summary, the Arab countries in this study have the following in common:

1. Most of the QA agencies for these countries were established by the government.
2. The function of the external QA agencies is similar, cover both public and private higher education institutions and the quality process is mandatory.
3. Review panels do not always cover institutional and program accreditation concurrently.
4. The activities conducted, the duration of the site visits, and consideration of QA outcomes are similar.
5. There is a willingness by QA agencies to collaborate with other regional and international agencies.

Quality Assurance in Islamic Countries

The Islamic States have approved the creation of a network for QA and accreditation of higher education institutions to promote creativity, innovation, research, and development. The network was proposed by Malaysia and announced at the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the 57 Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), held in Syria in 2009, to strengthen the QA of institutions in the Islamic region and to enhance cooperation between similar bodies in other regional and international countries. It also aims to raise the level of poor-quality universities, build and retain a critical mass of world-class scientists and technologists in targeted science and technology areas, promote relevant research and development outcomes, as well as improve scientific, technological, and innovative capacities of institutions.

During the first roundtable meeting of Quality Assurance Agencies of the OIC, member countries organized by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) in November 2009 in Kuala Lumpur, the following were agreed upon:

First, there would be the establishment of an association of QA agencies and authorities responsible for higher education quality among the countries of the Islamic world to be tentatively known as *Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World*.

Second, the purposes of the Association shall be:

1. To explore different needs for QA capacity building programs of QA agencies in countries of the Islamic world
2. To develop and implement capacity building programs
3. To promote collaboration and exchange of best practices, experiences, and expertise among QA agencies of countries of the Islamic world
4. To promote cooperation with regional and international QA organizations
5. To undertake other QA-related activities as deemed necessary

Third, to carry out these purposes, the following mechanisms shall be established:

1. A Roundtable Meeting of the Association shall be convened once every 2 years. Special meetings may be convened as and when agreed upon.
2. A Pro Tem Committee of at least five but not more than seven members shall be formed to prepare the framework of the Association.
3. An interim secretariat shall be established in the MQA. A permanent secretariat shall be determined within 1 year.

Fourth, the association is open for participation by QA agencies and authorities responsible for QA of higher education in OIC member countries (see http://www.mqa.gov.my).

Quality Assurance in Jordan (the Higher Education Accreditation Commission – HEAC)

The human development issue took a large portion of the attention of the policymakers in the planning field in Jordan both quantitatively and qualitatively in both public and private higher education. Jordan has witnessed a significant development in the sector of Higher Education since 1952 with the establishment of a 1 year postsecondary teacher training class, followed by the first university program, which began in 1962 with the establishment of the University of Jordan.

Article 3 of the University Law of 1964 summarizes the formal functions of the universities as follows: to afford university study opportunities; to encourage scientific progress and serve the society; to provide the country with specialties in different fields; to pay special attention to the Arab-Islamic civilization and spread its heritage; to participate positively in international thought; and to strengthen cultural and scientific ties with other Arab and foreign universities and scientific organizations.

The rise in the institutions and universities of higher education, for more than half a century, offered a solid and intellectual learning opportunity. This made the Jordanian Higher education institutions realize early on the importance of empowering individuals, especially the youth, through focusing on the knowledge economy and the use of technology in planning and educational programs. Consequently, Jordan has been effecting continuous changes, transformations and developments of the higher education sector with the aim of achieving quality and excellence. The concern for QA and accreditation in higher education in Jordan began with the establishment of the first university 50 years ago, and this concern has continued to grow with the increase in the number of higher education institutions. Jordan was the first country in the region to establish private universities and the first to start the accreditation process. However, the criterion used was closer being a license than it was to an accreditation or QA activity.

As a guarantee for a minimum standard of quality and excellence, legislation was promulgated in 1998 to establish the Accreditation Council (AC). Its primary focus was private universities. Exempting public universities from accreditation was a matter of concern at the beginning, particularly as their enrollment continued to exceed capacity levels and issues of quality became prominent.

Accreditation was the core of the search for quality. It lays the foundation for quality and excellence. Consequently, accreditation was instituted from the very beginning of the development of the higher education sector and it was assigned to different agencies and bodies, but was always impelled by the two objectives of quality and excellence. For this purpose a number of by-laws, guidelines, and benchmarks were formulated to be observed by all private universities in Jordan as basic requirements for any progress towards quality and excellence. The AC, which shouldered this responsibility as a part of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research was dissolved in June, 2007 and a Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC) was established in its place. HEAC is both a financially and administratively independent entity and was set up by the modified Law (13) in 2009.

The Commission's Council consists of a president, a vice-president, two full-time members, and three part-time members, all of whom have high academic and administrative qualifications.

According to the enabling law the Commission is administratively, geographically, and financially independent. It is entrusted with a number of tasks that constitute its mission. The law states that the objective of the Commission is to enhance and guarantee quality in higher education, to encourage universities to be open to and interact with international scientific research institutions and accreditation commissions, and to upgrade higher education in Jordan on the basis of internationally recognized criteria. The Commission Council is empowered to formulate relevant criteria; to audit, evaluate, and accredit institutions of higher education, making sure that they comply with all pertinent regulations; to collect data and do research related to higher education; and to ratify reports by the president and committees and issue relevant research, studies, and brochures.

The scope of HEAC's jurisdiction encompasses:

- A mandate over private and public universities, including all and any foreign higher education institutions affiliated with Jordanian universities.
- Responsibility for the National Testing Center, which designs and conducts standardized tests in all fields.
- The advancement of sound means and methods to ensure that higher education institutions are in full compliance with all its regulations.

HEAC's vision is to bring Jordanian higher education institutions to international competitiveness, and its mission is to elevate Jordanian higher education institutions' performance and reinforce their competitive capabilities to reach national, regional, and international levels, as well as guaranteeing the implementation of accreditation and quality criteria to ensure the achievement of their objectives. The aim is to:

- Raise the status of higher education in the Kingdom.
- Assure its quality.
- Motivate higher education institutions to interact with national and international universities and scientific research centers as well as international accreditation and quality control commissions.
- Develop higher education through incorporating internationally comparable standards.

In order to enhance and monitor higher education institutions, HEAC implements accreditation criteria and standards processes as follows:

1. Institutional (General) Accreditation: A series of auditing and evaluative steps focusing on the institution as a whole, including its infrastructure, human resources both the academic as well as the administrative levels. It relates to the achievement of the institutional mission and objectives. It focuses on faculty members and teaching staff, area of the land and the functional space, classrooms, library, admission, and registration.

2. Program (Special) Accreditation: A series of auditing and evaluative procedures focused on a degree-granting program within an institution of higher education, which is discipline related, preparing professionals for special occupations. It relates to professional expectations and requirements for entry and practice in a field. It focuses on program objectives, teaching plan, faculty members and staff, textbooks, journals, dictionaries and encyclopedias, laboratories and workshops (if applicable), tools, instructional materials, general requirements/administration, and students.

These accreditation standards and criteria have been developed on the principles of continuous quality improvement and focus on the educational process as a whole. Jordanian Higher Education Institutions continue to adhere to minimum accreditation criteria, in order to develop and enhance their quality of higher education to an internationally competitive level. QA in Jordan has become imperative in all public and private organizations, receiving worldwide acclaim. So accreditation criteria are minimum prerequisites for any QA requests, while among the QA objectives are implementation of advanced methods of assuring quality, continued enhancement, and development of work practices and achievement of the highest possible levels in terms of education outcomes and accountability, while striving to develop institutional and program standards and criteria in order to respond to empirical changes. HEAC receives feedback from evaluative committees entrusted with investigating accreditation requests, feedback from workshops, meetings, and at the same time, cooperating with higher education institutions.

The QA stages commence by conducting the "Self-Study" stage where the higher education institution undergoes a phase of self-evaluation. It compares its actual information/indications against each criterion of minimum accreditation and QA. The institution may then reexamine its policies, teaching methods, and learning environment to adjust, modify, or apply corrective action. This must be documented and presented to HEAC for further investigation. Second, the "Peer-Review" stage involves investigating the information the institution in question has provided to HEAC, preparing to pay a formal visit to the institution in question to cross check the information provided with the actual situation to determine whether indeed it meets the accreditation and QA criteria. At this point, the committee submits its report to HEAC, including suggestions for improvements which the institution in question must make.

Finally, there is the "Decision Making" stage, where HEAC further scrutinizes the details of the committee's report along with the institution's report to make a final decision concerning the findings, and then publishes its decision without details to safeguard the integrity of the institution. The decision is one of the following:

- Accreditation
- Postponement until corrective action is completed
- Accreditation not granted

In responding to what is mentioned above, HEAC strives to set criteria and indicators for the purpose of assuring quality and standards and to evaluate higher

education institutions fairly and ethically, on the basis of merit. The criteria for QA that have been implemented in Jordan are:

- First Criterion: Vision, Mission, and Objectives
- Second Criterion: Educational programs and their effectiveness
- Third criterion: Students
- Fourth Criterion: Faculty Members
- Fifth Criterion: Scholarships, Grants, Scientific Research, and creativity
- Sixth Criterion: Library and Information Resources
- Seventh Criterion: Governance and Administration
- Eight Criterions: Financial Resources
- Ninth Criterion: Physical Resources
- Tenth Criterion: Institutional Integrity
- Eleventh Criterion: Community Interaction
- Twelfth Criterion: Quality Assurance Management (QAM)

In order to consider the QA criteria, rubrics are applied, and three criteria are considered: design, implementation, and effectiveness. The university which obtains an evaluation score of 90% or above, will be awarded a certificate of high quality achievement, and will be given permission to raise its capacity by 15% on average. Those universities obtaining an evaluation score of 84% or above will be awarded a certificate of quality achievement and will be allowed to raise capacity by 10% on average. Finally, the universities which obtain 80% or above receive an appreciation certificate from HEAC enabling them to compete for a quality certificate (HEAC 2009).

Conclusion

In closure, QA is not an end in itself; it is the responsibility of both the higher education institutions and QA commissions. Nevertheless, in the Arab countries, it is still in its learning phase, and the processes and ideas behind it are still developing. In view of this, Arab countries need to be ready to implement change, even radical change, and more importantly, to be sure that their systems are setting up agencies, bodies, and commissions that are capable of change.

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Chapter 61
Administrative Approaches to Diversity: Sharing and Imposing Meaning

James Ryan

Introduction

The job of senior school administrator continues to be as challenging as it ever was. The seemingly endless parade of new policies and mandates from central offices and state legislatures; increasingly high expectations from district administrators, teachers, parents and the public; more complex social, cultural and political pressures; quicker transfers among schools; less time to attend to expanding responsibilities; dwindling resources for growing needs; and rapidly changing curricula are just a few of the issues that contemporary head teachers and principals have to contend with. One of the most demanding of these is the changing nature of communities. Increasingly diverse communities present significant challenges for administrators of today. More to the point, many administrators find themselves unable to grasp or make sense of issues that they encounter. They struggle to understand policies in the same way that community members do or take decisive action on the basis of their often tentative perceptions (Ryan 2003a; Evans 2007). The chapter explores this issue. In particular, it looks at two situations where administrators of diverse schools found themselves having to try to make sense of situations that were new to them. The chapter begins by elaborating the concept of sense making. This is followed by a description of the two scenarios. The subsequent two sections analyse the two cases.

Making Sense in Diverse School Communities

Making sense of events in diverse school communities can be a challenge for administrators of schools in the Western world (Evans 2007; Ryan 2003a). Some of these challenges occur as principals and head teachers encounter traditions,

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perspectives and languages with which they are unfamiliar. These scenarios now happen with more frequency than they used to, due in part to the shift in immigration patterns over the past two decades. More people now immigrate to Western countries from developing countries than ever before (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2006; Census Canada 2003; Government of the United Kingdom 2005; U.S. Census Bureau 2001). One consequence of these patterns is that communities and schools are more racially and culturally diverse than they were 20 years ago. This is particularly evident in larger cities where schools may have upwards of 60 ethnicities represented in their student populations (Ryan 2006). But racial and cultural differences do not just emanate from the presence of foreign-born people; native-born non-white populations are also burgeoning in Western countries. In the United States, for example, people of African and Hispanic heritage constituted 16.6 per cent of the total population in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2001). By 2035 the "minority population" will exceed 50% (Villegus and Lucas 2004).

The challenges associated with issues of understanding or making sense of what occurs in racially and culturally diverse schools are significant. In these situations, school administrators may not understand events in the same way as others in their school communities. Needless to say, leaders' perceptions are particularly important in these contexts (Evans 2007). Indeed, the manner in which leaders apprehend the world about them will dictate their responses to it. Over the years the way in which academics have conceptualized this response process has changed. More contemporary views reject dated ideas that the "outside" world unilaterally imposes itself on people, or that men and women simply respond to stimuli in mechanical ways (see, for example, Skinner 1976). Those who oppose these notions believe that this response process is much more complex than these behavioural explanations depict (see, for example, Blumer 1969). They contend that people's responses to "stimuli" will always be associated with a complex process of interpretation. In other words, people necessarily interpret what they see about them and confer meaning or sense on what they see. In this view, meaning or making sense becomes central to human action and interaction; people, including administrators, act only after they make sense of their surroundings, and the meanings that they eventually attribute to these environments will dictate what they eventually do.

Unlike behavioural response mechanisms, making sense or conferring meaning is a complex process. This complexity can be traced, in part, to its "cognitive" nature – making sense involves "mental" work. But the process is not exclusively cognitive. It is also social in nature, which only adds layers of complexity. In order to make sense of things, people need to draw on social resources. These resources can take many forms. One of the most important of these is discourses – series of interrelated words, statements, ideas, concepts and practices that provide the fodder for people to make sense with (Ryan 1999). In order to make sense of the world, people must place the raw material of their experience into a discourse. So, for example, in order for administrators to make sense of the attitudes of some South Asian parents or of protests by African American students, they will have to draw from the plethora of already-available ways of understanding these phenomena, like ideas about preferred parenting styles, or the value of orderly behaviour.

While the process of making sense is complex, it is also variable; there are many ways in which people can make sense of similar situations. Context is important in this process (see, for example, Evans 2007; Ryan 1999), but so is the identity of the person who is making sense. While discourses provide positions for people to occupy in order for them to make sense, they do not merely impose themselves on people. Indeed, people are required to "complete" the meaning available in these discourses (Hall 1997; Ryan 1999). This is why the identity, that is, the prior social position of the person, will have a significant impact on how meaning is produced. Everyone brings with them racialized, classed, gendered, positions/identities, and with these, different experiences of the world. And so not all individuals will be able or willing to identify with the positions set up for them by certain discourses and to take the meanings associated with these discourses. In other words, some discourses will not make sense to everyone. This is because they may not work in some people's interests and/or may simply not conform to their experiences. In situations where not all are willing or able to identify with the same discourses, people will routinely attribute different meanings to similar situations. One consequence of this is that people may not comprehend what others are trying to convey. Another result is that understandings may be contested.

Misunderstandings and contests over meaning occur regularly in schools (Ryan 1999). This often happens in situations characterized by change, crises and ambiguity (Evans 2007). All of these can happen when white administrators encounter issues of race or culture in the contemporary changing demographic environment in which they work. In such situations, administrators may struggle to make sense of what is happening or try to get others to see things their way. In many of these cases, they may be unsure of how to act. In the end, though, whatever sense they make of particular events and the extent to which they wish their own understandings to prevail will dictate what they do. This chapter documents the plight of two administrators of diverse schools who found themselves in new and uncomfortable situations. It explores the ways in which they made sense of these events, the actions that they took and the consequences that flowed from their actions. The original depictions of these cases can be found in Ryan (2003a, b) and Larson and Ovando (2001). The first case revolves around an administrator of a diverse school who had been on the job only a short time.

Wayward Daughters

An administrator of a large diverse secondary school for just 3 months, Barbara found herself challenged by a new sort of problem. Two South Asian families had come to her in the hope that she would solve what they believed to be a very serious problem. Prior to the meeting, one of the parents told her that both families had received a number of phone calls from someone who claimed that their teenage daughters had been dating young men, skipping classes and "doing this and doing that". Both young women, however, vigorously denied the allegations. But their denials turned out to be quite beside the point. The father of one of the girls told

Barbara in no uncertain terms that he wanted not only the phone calls, but all talk of these alleged indiscretions put to an immediate end. He stressed that if she could not do this, then he would take matters up with her superiors. As it turned out, this was no simple problem. At the time of the initial call, Barbara knew little of the group in question.

Located in a large Canadian city, the community that served the school had become increasing diverse over the past 15 years or so (see, for example, Statistics Canada 2008). Like many other urban school communities in the same area, this school had seen its student population change dramatically over this time – from a student body of primarily Anglo European heritage to one that displayed a wide variety of heritages. Most of the new students were children of new immigrants who had come not from Europe, but mostly from Asian, African and Caribbean countries. The students spoke many different languages and displayed a range of cultural practices. While the student population had changed over this time, the educator complement remained stable (see, for example, Ryan et al. 2009). Administrators and teachers were almost exclusively white Anglos of European heritage who knew little about the practices of their non-European students and their parents.

What did Barbara do? In her own words, Barbara's strategy was to "fly by the seat of your pants … and get information" (Ryan 2003b, p. 107). Like many other administrators in these kinds of situations, she sought to gather enough information so that she could understand the "culture" of the group in question, and in doing so, the circumstances of the problem situation. She believed these tactics would allow her to take appropriate action. Barbara's quest to understand the group and the situation began with what she described as her research. Because she had a general sense of the issue in advance, she was able to consult a number of sources and use the information as she prepared for the meeting with the two families. Barbara approached several teachers and students and spoke with a board consultant. From the students and teachers, she learned details of the specific situation and developed a general overview of the group in question. The consultant, on the other hand, supplied her with further details about the practices of this group. On the basis of this information, Barbara was able to establish that the callers were in all probability young suitors who had been rejected by the daughters of the two families. The calls were, in her estimation, acts of retribution. These young men apparently knew "how to press the fathers' buttons" and did so with the intention of retaliating against the girls.

Barbara also learned more about the particular group, and this knowledge was subsequently confirmed in her meeting with the parents. While the parents were obviously concerned with the actual behaviour of their daughters, they were apparently even more concerned about the impression that might be left with their community. Barbara understood that if word spread about their daughters' alleged indiscretions, these parents would have little or no chance of arranging marriages for them, a task that went to the heart of their duties as parents. In other words, the parents' priority was to save face in their community. When it came time to meet the parents, Barbara felt she knew exactly what the parents were talking and thinking about.

She believed that she had been able to understand enough about the parents' perspective to establish that the issue revolved not around the welfare of the young women, but their reputations. She knew that the girls would have to return to Asia if the rumours the young men were circulating found their way into the community.

Once she possessed this information, Barbara was able to formulate a plan to placate the parents. For her, a key rested with her ability to convince the parents that their daughters' reputations were not in jeopardy, focusing on the circulation of information rather than on the behaviour of the young women. In the meeting she told the parents about what she believed to be the origin and reason for the phone calls. She also took care to attribute the improprieties to the boys and not to their daughters. In the end, Barbara believed that the parents left the meeting "happy", apparently satisfied that she was doing all she could to help them out. The parents seemed now to understand more about the disturbing calls they were getting, and they appeared to accept that it was not necessarily their daughters' indiscretions that were prompting them. Most importantly, they seemed to believe that the calls did not necessarily mean that they would lose face in their communities or that they would have to send their daughters back to India. But Barbara also took action that she hid from the parents. Believing she was acting in the interests of the young women, she arranged to have them talk to a counsellor about their situations, a move that the parents would certainly have opposed.

The Protest

Jefferson Heights' talent show did not turn out as expected. From the outset tension ran high. Members of the audience – which included students, teachers and parents – continued to come and go during performances. White students would leave when black students were performing, and vice versa. Things started to get out of hand when a group of African American students took the stage, tore up a paper replica of the American flag, threw it into the audience and proceeded to open an African National Congress flag and parade across the stage – all this on a day when American troops were leaving for the Persian Gulf. The reactions to the display were polarized. Many of the white people – including war veterans – were offended. Some booed and others left. By contrast, the African Americans in the audience cheered and began to chant. Chaos ensued. Two white administrators jumped on the stage and attempted to put an end to the show. This only incited the crowd further, and students began beating on the stage and yelling. To avoid an all-out riot, the authorities decided that it was best to let the show proceed, and they relented. However, when the concert ended, the principal knew that he had to take action.

Conflict of this sort was new to Jefferson Heights. A senior high school located in a Midwestern America, for years it had served a predominantly stable and quiet white middle- and working-class suburban community of 90,000. Educators and community members knew one another, attended the same community functions

and got along well with everyone. One teacher labelled the community at that time as the "Land of Oz", referring to its idyllic and homogeneous nature. Things began to change about 15 years before the student protest when the community was annexed by a major metropolitan city. In time, desegregation orders, more busing and expanding industry changed the demographics. During this time, the African American student population at Jefferson Heights went from next to nothing to 23 per cent of the entire student population. The predominantly white educator population was not prepared for this shift and many resented the presence of so many African American students. On the other hand, African American students and their parents were not satisfied with the efforts of educators. Parents believed that teachers did too little to help their children, treated them poorly and suspended too many. They were also unhappy that the school had only hired three African American teachers over the previous 15 years and failed to acknowledge African American interests in the curriculum.

Sensing the importance of a quick and decisive response to the student performance, the principal took action. Even though he understood that the students might have had legitimate reasons for doing what they did, he nevertheless preferred to frame the protest as simply a violation of school rules. Bowing to teacher wishes and what he believed to be the sentiments of the white community, he administered punishment appropriate for deviant behaviour and suspended the students. The African American community was not happy with this judgment. Not only did it feel that the protest was justified, it also believed that the suspension of the students would hurt the latter's future educational prospects, not to mention sidestepping the serious race issues in the school. The African American community, however, had little success in getting their message through to the school. When the pastor of the community met with the principal, he was told that the school did not have any race issues. Seeing no prospect of making headway with the school, black community members approached the superintendent. Although sympathetic to their cause, the superintendent preferred not to intervene in the matter, citing the district's practice of letting schools handle their own issues.

The community's next move was to organize a community-wide meeting for parents. During the meeting, parents and concerned citizens decided to approach the Black Ministerial Association, an influential and politically active group, for help. When the group's initial action – using the pulpit to rouse parents to voice their opinions – did not have the desired impact, the group organized a sit-in in the school. After alerting the media on the designated day, a large group from the African American community entered the school. Surprised to see the group in the building, the principal managed to steer them into the auditorium where they had a frank discussion of the issues. The encounter, however, took a turn for the worse when this large group emerged from the auditorium and met students who had just finished their morning classes. Taken off guard by the presence of so many unfamiliar African Americans in the school, a number of white students panicked, triggering further pandemonium. To head off a potential disaster, the administration directed students to buses and they were driven home. To the administrators' chagrin, the local media captured in graphic detail all the turmoil.

This incident proved to be the turning point. The administration lost its white community support when parents and community members witnessed the events on the evening news. Images of both black and white students in tears convinced the television audience that students were being treated unfairly and that action needed to be taken. It was at this point that the superintendent intervened and called a community meeting. Twelve hundred people attended the gathering, and as they listened to various stories, came to understand that the school was a very different place for black and white students, respectively. Spurred to action by what they had learned, the superintendent and the board promoted a number of initiatives. These included a venue for students to talk about racial issues with educators, a focus on issues of race, efforts to hire minority teachers and the development of a more multicultural curriculum. They also investigated some of the more disturbing accounts of school incidents. The findings of this investigation eventually led to the dismissal of the three vice-principals.

Making Sense of Race and Culture

The administrators in both of the above scenarios encountered situations with which they were unfamiliar. Both struggled with issues of understanding in these diverse settings. The way in which they initially approached their respective challenges differed though. Initially, Barbara sought to make sense of relevant events by gathering information so that she could understand why the different parties acted as they did. The principal of Jefferson Heights, on the other hand, simply sought to impose his meaning on everyone else. The eventual meanings that both administrators attributed to their respective situations reflected the experiences, identities and the interests that they brought to these challenges. The respective actions generated very different responses, however.

Seeking Meaning

Initially, Barbara's attempts at making sense of the problem situation revolved around a search. This was because she simply did not know enough about what was happening to understand the events or come up with a plan to deal with them. She could not explain why the parents were so determined in their request, why they were getting the phone calls or what their daughters were actually doing. Moreover, as a white woman of European heritage who was born in Canada, she knew little of the group in question. To her credit, she understood that making sense of the situation required her to figure out the motives of the actors in the drama (see, for example, Schutz 1967). In order to do this, though, she had to obtain more information about the group with whom she was dealing. After acquiring this information from a variety of sources, as well as particulars about the actual case, she was able

to piece together a plausible explanation for what was happening: jilted young suitors were attempting to punish the young women for rejecting them by playing on the parents' fears that their daughters were doing things that would make them ineligible for marriage.

Whether she realized it or not, the ways in which Barbara was able to interpret the events were, in important ways limited, circumscribed by the frames or lenses through which she viewed the events. These frames were in turn conditioned by what she brought to the situation – her position/identity, her previous experiences and her associated interests – as well as the discourses to which she appealed to make sense of events. All would have an impact on the way she assembled the various facts of the situation, the emphasis that she placed on certain elements, and of course, the actions that she would eventually take. Most influential were her position as (a new) administrator and her identity as a white woman of European heritage. These positions/identities prompted Barbara to gravitate toward certain discourses in order to help her make sense of the events. While she may have believed that she accurately understood the group with whom she dealt, there were a number of key elements that she understood differently than the parents.

Barbara's position as an administrator and the interests associated with this position had an impact on the discourses to which she appealed to make sense of the events. New to the position, she wanted to do a good job and also to be seen as doing a good job. For her, doing a good job meant making sure that parents were satisfied with what happened at school. Among other things, she was not anxious to have parental complaints reach her superiors. As a new administrator, she wanted to avoid issues with the central office. So she was not really concerned about whether she and the parents made sense of the events in the same way. Instead, her first priority was to know enough about the situation so that she could take action that would placate the parents. As a consequence, she gravitated towards an understanding of the situation that would enable her to do this. While this required her to grasp the parents' relevant motives, it did not call for Barbara to understand the situation in ways identical to that of the parents, or for that matter, to accept what she believed to be their motives. In the end, her understanding was sufficient to make choices that would satisfy the parents or at least enable them to leave the meeting "happy".

Barbara's identity as a white woman of European heritage also had a significant impact on how she made sense of the South Asian practices she encountered, the elements of the situation that she highlighted in the meeting with the parents and the subversive actions that she eventually took. Raised in a community with white European traditions, Barbara first encountered South Asians in her role as educator. Her knowledge of the group came from her direct experiences and encounters in school and from the media. The other relevant detail was that Barbara considered herself an ardent feminist. She was committed to the principle of equality of the sexes and did what she could to promote it in her job and in her life outside of work. Needless to say, her first-hand experience of gender relationships between the sexes of the South Asian group did not sit well with her. She was not happy with the leading roles that the men took in the meeting, and what she felt were the subordinate

positions of the women. Referring to the actions of the spokesman for the group, she exclaimed that she wanted to "crunch this little man", noting that his actions made her "sad" and "enraged" (Ryan 2003b, p. 108). But the actions of the men in themselves did not prompt Barbara to react in the way that she did. Her largely negative response emanated from the connection that she made between the men's behaviour and what she already understood about South Asian gender practices – understandings that she would have acquired from the largely unfavourable and powerful discourses associated with such practices.

In order to make sense of the cultural practices of the group with which the families were associated and the particular behaviour of the actors in this drama, Barbara relied on a powerful discourse that characterizes South Asian child/parent and gender relationship in negative ways. These characterizations depict confused and oppressed young Asian Women in need of rescue from backward, overbearing and unyielding parents, cultural practices and families (Handa 2003). Portrayals of this sort regularly show up in the media. As I was writing this chapter, the Toronto Star (2009a, b, c) featured a series of articles that emphasized the hardships associated with arranged marriages for South Asian women, referring to these cultural practices as part of a "disturbing tradition". This discourse also emerges in other contexts. For example, many have appealed to it to justify sending troops to Afghanistan. The argument is that the West needs to intervene in order to rescue an oppressed people from a backward and uncivilized tradition (Handa 2003).

For many Canadians of European heritage, this discourse makes much sense because it is consistent with their anxiety over current demographic changes. Many Canadians worry about recent immigration. Indeed one-third indicates that they would prefer to exclude from Canada people who are different than most (white) Canadians (Handa 2003). The media plays on these fears, routinely and erroneously painting immigrants as violent and lawless and emphasizing that white people will eventually be outnumbered (Cohen 2008). For some time now, this anxiety has been associated with a desire to control. As far back as the nineteenth century, British colonial powers sought to characterize South Asian practices as primitive in order to justify the extension of their rule over the people in the area. The fear and control theme continues to play a part in how Canadians perceive these cultural practices. Characterizing South Asian family relationships as primitive or simply wrong provides a way for White Canadians to contain real or imagined threats that a non-white population presents to the centrality of a white Canadian identity and the maintenance of white power and privilege. Portraying other cultures as backward is an attempt to ensure the moral superiority of white Canadians (Handa 2003).

Elements of fear, control and moral superiority are evident in Barbara's characterization of South Asian gender practices. Referring to what she perceives as the abusive treatment of young women, she says:

> I can't accommodate that kind of abuse of young women. It would be the same thing if I found out a young girl was to undergo circumcision … I couldn't stand it. I wouldn't give a damn about their culture or what they believe is important. There comes a point where you have to say: "This is wrong, you're in Canada now." (Ryan 2003b, p. 109)

While Barbara's research allowed her to characterize these cultural practices in a way that suited her, the meaning that she attributed to them and to the related events did not coincide with that of the families. To begin with, the value that she placed on the treatment of the young women differed sharply from the views of the parents. While Barbara characterized this relationship as "abusive", the parents and their community believed it played a crucial role in the maintenance of their culture. For many South Asians, women are carriers of culture, symbols that distinguish it from an encroaching Western culture. This is a view that reaches back to the struggle for self-rule in South Asia (Handa 2003). At the time, the depiction of women played a key role in nationalists' efforts to forge a country. The latter employed portrayals of South Asian femininity as chaste, domestic and docile to establish standards that defined the boundaries of what it meant to be South Asian in their efforts to protect, preserve and strengthen the inner core of national culture. The view of women as symbols of an inner culture in need of protection and preservation persists today in the South Asian diaspora. Anxious about a disintegrating family and social fabric under siege from a hostile Western world, many South Asians who have emigrated from their ancestral lands appeal to traditional discourses in an attempt to preserve their threatened culture. As a consequence, their obligation to oversee young women is as strong as ever. Young women, on the other hand, particularly those who have been in the country for a time, do not always follow these traditional conventions. The pull of powerful Western practices, the value attached to them and the rewards that can accrue from following them, entices many to engage in practices of which their parents would not approve. In contrast to what Barbara may think, however, many of these young women likely continue to have loving relationships with their parents and feel an obligation to them and their communities (Brah and Minhas 1985). And so conversations with counsellors, particularly those who do not understand South Asian ways, may not always be helpful (Handa 2003).

In the end, Barbara's efforts to understand the situation accomplished what she wanted. She learned enough to appease the parents, and she provided an outlet for the young women. This, however, did not mean that she made sense of the practices in question in the same way that the South Asians parents or their daughters did. For one thing, the value that she placed on the cultural practices differed sharply from the parents. Moreover, her understanding of these cultural practices was unique, conditioned by the interests and experiences associated with her identity as a white woman administrator of European heritage and the discourses that made most sense for these identities. As a consequence, Barbara never really came to understand the full significance of the gender practices or the complicated relationships that the young women likely had with their parents. But this did not really matter to her. She was able to get what she wanted out of the situation, imposing her own meaning on the events in a subtle way, prompted no doubt by her sensitivity of the need to appease the parents and her political awareness of district politics. As a result, her understanding was not contested. The imposition of administrative meaning at Jefferson Heights, however, was not so subtle, and given the circumstances, it was vigorously contested.

Contesting Meaning

The events surrounding the student actions at the Jefferson Heights concert revolved around a struggle over meaning that centred on the relationship of the concert events with issues of race in the school. From the outset, the principal and members of his administrative team sought to impose their interpretation on others, characterizing these events exclusively as an illegitimate violation of school rules. Part of these efforts involved attempts to sever all connections to issues of race, even though administrators acknowledged the existence of this relationship. The African American community, on the other hand, sought to emphasize this relationship. They saw the students' actions as a political statement geared to draw attention to serious issues of race in the school, and they did what they could to get others to recognize this connection. The identities of the respective parties, their experiences and their associated interests shaped the different ways in which they make sense of the proceedings, and in the end the resources that they were able to mobilize dictated which meaning would eventually prevail.

It did not take long for the administration to decide on a course of action after the concert ended. The principal decided to suspend the students the following day. Their reason for doing this was straightforward – he saw it as a violation of schools rules and applied a penalty as they would other transgressions. Immediately, the principal and his administrative team sought to rationalize this decision, screening out aspects of the situation and emphasizing others (Larson and Ovando 2001). To this end, they sought to depict the student protesters as either "disturbed trouble-makers or docile followers who lacked the mental capacity to know what they were doing". They portrayed these young men as deviants, pointing out that some of them had been suspended on previous occasions and others were "special education students". On the other hand, they neglected to mention that the protest organizer was a very good student and a capable and popular leader. In doing this, they made sure to direct attention to the deviant behaviour of the students and away from any problematic school practices. This enabled them to construct a straightforward image of "uncontrollable and potentially dangerous youth in need of discipline".

The administrators of Jefferson Heights employed a number of discourses that enabled them to make sense of the particular events and more general context for these events. Their identities as white administrators of European heritage led them to gravitate toward certain discourses. Like most administrators, they identified with an "order and control" discourse (see, for example, Ryan and Rottmann 2009); they believed that their task as administrators was to ensure that order prevailed in the school and that the best way to do this was to control what happened. Naturally, they would interpret any extraordinary event through the lens of this control orientation. This interest in control was also sharpened by another discourse that made sense to them – fear. White community members and teachers feared the black students and community members. Finally, the administrators also appealed to a "contest" discourse to help them make sense of, and deal with, the issue of the student actions.

When the community took issue with the school's reaction, administrators immediately recognized the combative nature of the relationship and the importance of shaping the issue in a way that favoured their interests. The discourse that they employed to make sense of the events reflected this battlefield understanding. They maintained, for example, that the community "went on the offensive" and that the administration had to "defend their positions" (Larson and Ovando 2001, p. 45) if they were to "win" in a contest of winners and losers. Doing this required that the administrative team present a united front. One administrator put it this way:

> If the parents see that there isn't a lot of agreement on how to handle a problem, then they really put the pressure on, and then they win. If there is no cohesive inside unit that show it has the knowledge necessary to handle the problem, then the outsiders are going to win. The parents are going to be able to take control, and they really shouldn't. (Larson and Ovando 2001, p. 44)

The way in which the administration sought to win the fight was to steer away from framing it in ways that provided the opposition with the opportunity to use this characterization against them. This meant, at least for one administrator, seeing the issue as one that pertained to individual students and steering clear of more global issues, like civil rights. He maintained that:

> You start talking about freedom and you get into civil rights and you are going to lose. You need to go with the facts, and deal with each individual student and that's what we wanted to do… when you get people wanting to protect students' civil liberties, you get diverted and people get scared, and they begin making compromises. And then the students win. Now, why should students like that win? (Larson and Ovando 2001, p. 45)

As in Barbara's case, the Jefferson Heights administrators sought to do what they could to ensure an orderly environment. This seemed particularly important in the wake of the student concert when teachers did what they could to put pressure on the administrators to do something about what they believed to be out-of-control student behaviour. Teachers took this action because they were afraid of African American students; they made sense of the student actions through a discourse of fear. This fear emerged in a slightly different way than it did in Barbara's case, however. Where Barbara, like many other Canadians, feared the loss of valued ways of life, Jefferson Heights teachers and community members appeared to fear the physical presence of African American students. They characterized the behaviour of black students as "threatening" and "scary". This fear, however, was not restricted to the white teachers and members of the community. African American parents did not share this fear. One African American parent describes what he believes to be an irrational fear of black students. He says:

> White teachers and administrators are often afraid of black kids, especially black males. And some of these kids can have pretty tough exteriors because of the experiences they have had, but inside they are just scared and just trying to find a place where they can fit in. But when a group of black kids, especially black males, get angry, white people get real scared, and when the kids show that they weren't happy with what was going on in the school; it scared some people. (Larson and Ovando 2001, p. 56)

This discourse of fear is not unique to this school or community. It is a powerful discourse that transcends schools and communities in the United States and elsewhere.

Among the most prominent purveyors of it is the media. Although it has softened its representation of African Americans over the years, most obviously in television comedies and soap operas that feature middle-class portrayals, the media continues to shop negative images of black people. For example, white characters in popular contemporary television series like *House* and *CSI* display far more negative body language toward their black peers than they do to members of their own race (Weisbuch et al. 2009). Broadcast journalism also continues to portray negative images of African Americans. Over the years, the news media have progressed from excluding racial groups and issues to coverage that features threatening and confrontational images. It offers viewers an endless parade of broken families, drug users, violent young males and teenage gangs. Through all of this the media has served up ways of making sense of African Americans through a discourse of fear, painting them as a threat to the social order. Although such coverage may not be filled with racial epitaphs, it is generally filtered through a white perspective, skewed to middle-class attitudes and geared toward simultaneously raising and massaging the fears of the latter (Ryan 1999).

The African American parents brought with them very different experiences from those of the educators and white community members and, as a consequence, made sense of the student actions in a different way. The control and fear discourse simply did not make sense to them. Instead they made sense of the events through a discourse of justice, undoubtedly prompted by their own histories with issues of race. Primarily concerned with the poor treatment that their children were receiving at school, they saw the student performance as a desperate attempt to do something about an unjust situation. While students may well have broken rules, they felt that these missteps paled beside the serious racial issues at the school. The parents believed that students were forced into this action by a school that did not value them. But try as they might to link the student action with issues of race, parents were turned back at every turn. Initial approaches by the community did little to dent the resolve of the administration to see the event as a violation of rules and to deflect attention away from the race issues. At the outset, administrators were able to do this because they had superior resources at their disposal. Confident in the central office's practice of non-intervention and in their support from the local white community, they simply rebuffed initial efforts on the part of community members to open a dialogue about the race issues. The position of power that the administration occupied allowed them to define the issue as one of deviance, at least for a few days.

The balance of power, however, was to shift over the next few days. Stonewalled by the administration and left with few options, the African American parents approached a politically active group for assistance. These local activists devised a number of strategies that were designed to pressure the administration, the central office and the general public. While the first tactic did not produce the desired ends, the next one – a sit-in by African American community members – made headway. When he saw the mass of protesters the principal recognized that he had little choice but to talk to them. The discussion proved to be profitable for the community, and the principal pulled back somewhat on the suspensions. But more importantly

he agreed to talk about issues of race. The shift in the balance of power came, however, when the general public saw on television that night the chaos that ensued when the community group left the auditorium. Seeing their own children in tears, the white community turned on the administration, tipping the balance of power. The central district office also got into the act, calling a town meeting, specifically to discuss issues of race at Jefferson Heights. In the end, the African American community was able to shift the meaning of the student actions to one that was associated with issues of race at the school.

Sharing and Imposing Meaning

Administrators of diverse schools are invariably involved in issues that revolve around the sharing or imposing of meaning. The scenarios presented above revolve around two practices associated with making sense in diverse school settings – understanding another's perspective and presenting one's own perspective. The first is associated with efforts to share meaning, while the second involves attempts at imposing meaning. Even though it is difficult to separate these two aspects of making sense, the respective scenarios presented earlier display more elements of one than the other. In the first situation, Barbara sought out ways to understand the perspective of the South Asian parents and students. The Jefferson Heights administrators, on the other hand, were primarily interested in imposing their own understanding on the school community. But both parties were also engaged in the other making sense practices. Barbara sought to impose her version of events on others, while the Jefferson Heights administrators were involved, albeit in a minor way, in attempts to understand another perspective.

Perhaps the most common issue in diverse schools is the difficulty that administrators, teachers, parents and students have in understanding one another. This is to be expected. The various members of diverse school communities routinely bring with them very different experiences, traditions and languages. Students in schools near Barbara's, for example, commonly speak up to 60 different languages. Given such differences, it is not surprising that administrators like Barbara spend much time trying to comprehend the motives, actions and speech of students and parents in their school communities. This sort of practice involves efforts at reaching a common understanding of events, actions and words with (different) others. Advocates of "multicultural" approaches to education see this as a good thing. For many years now, proponents of one dated strand of multiculturalism, for example, have accepted the belief that achieving understanding will, among other things, allow people from very different backgrounds to communicate effectively with one another and accept the perspectives of different others (Gibson 1976).

The events associated with Barbara's case, however, run contrary to these beliefs. To begin with, Barbara never really comes to understand the situation in the way in which the South Asian parents do. The experiences, identity and interests associated with a white feminist administrator of European heritage framed the

events for her in a way that made it difficult for her to do so. Indeed the discourses of order, control and fear appeared to make more sense to Barbara than discourses of honour and community obligation that the parents favoured. The consequence of this dissonance was that Barbara failed to understand the relationship that the young women had with their parents and the complexities of the lives of these young women in school and out. But this was not really a concern for Barbara. She was more interested in achieving her own goals than of coming to a common understanding with the parents, and the level of understanding that she was able to attain enabled her to do this, or so she believed. The facts of the case also appear to dispute another claim – that understanding will result in acceptance of other people and perspectives. In Barbara's case, her level of understanding evokes just the opposite – a disdain for the cultural practices that she encounters. Not only does she fail to accept them, but she is also repulsed by them. To be fair, Barbara never comes to understand these practices in the same way that the parents did, and so the question about what would have happened if she had understood events in ways identical to the parents' remains. But the reality is that it is unlikely that she would ever be able to understand the situation in this way, given her background and interests.

While their primary preoccupation revolved around the imposition of their understandings, the Jefferson Heights administrators also acknowledged, in some measure, an alternative interpretation of events. They made the effort – clandestine as it may have been – to come to interpret events as the African American parents did. The principal, for example, conceded that there were issues of race in the school, and that there was perhaps more to the situation than a straightforward case of deviance. One of the vice principals also acknowledged that issues of civil rights were involved, although he believed that it would not be prudent to acknowledge this if the administration was to prevail in this contest of wills. In the end though, the discourses of fear, order and control made more sense to these white administrators, and they did what they could to project the views associated with these ways of understanding. This decision, however, ultimately led to their undoing.

The other way of understanding the practice of sense making is to see it as a contested enterprise (Fiske 1996; Ryan Ryan 1999). While meaning making may involve efforts to come to a common understanding with others, these common understandings do not always emerge from an uncomplicated or free consensus among people. Instead, they are also the product of struggles. A key ingredient in these struggles is power. Foucault (1980), for example, contends that power produces knowledge. It does so in at least two ways. The first is by shaping the discourses that people draw upon to make sense. The second way that power works is by providing institutional resources that enable individuals to promote their favoured meanings. The bottom line here is that power will have an impact on the way in which events, behaviours and words come to be defined. Those who are able to marshal the most institutional resources and accompanying social power will be able to dictate what meanings prevail, although such ends will rarely be attained without a struggle.

The Jefferson Heights administrators actively attempted to impose their understanding on the school community. Confident in their positions of power, they went

about shaping their favoured meaning, characterizing the students in question as deviant and refusing to talk about issues of race with community members. Their power was such that they were able to sustain any challenges to their views, at least for a time. Their ability to define the situation came to an end, however, when community members rallied and shifted the base of support and the power that accompanied it. With this shift in power, African American community members were able to change the way in which the initial events were interpreted. In the end, the Jefferson Heights administrator's efforts to impose their meaning on the school community failed in large part because they miscalculated the power of the African American community and the parents' determination to set right the injustices that the administrators preferred to overlook.

Barbara was also engaged in imposing meaning, although certainly not to the extent that the Jefferson Heights administrators were. She worked to impose her understandings in more subtle and politically astute ways than the latter. Barbara did not share her understandings or feelings with the parents, knowing full well that this might not allow her to get what she wanted from the situation. Instead, she played on the parents' interests, mollifying their fears, and at the same time – unbeknownst to the parents – imposing her unique understanding of the situation on the young women in more direct ways. Careful to hide her actions from the parents, Barbara provided counselling for the young women, believing that this would help them with their difficult situation. In the end, Barbara acted without comprising her own unique understandings – a number of which differed from the parents – but did so without blatantly attempting to impose them on others. The result was that unlike the Jefferson Heights administrators, it appeared that she got what she wanted out of the situation, at least in the short term.

Learning in Diverse Contexts

The potential for learning in diverse school contexts is great. Administrators routinely come to learn new things as they struggle to make sense of the unfamiliar practices that they encounter. If these two cases are any indication of what happens in diverse schools, though, administrators spend as much effort imposing their knowledge on different others as they do trying to share their understandings with them. Truly enlightened learning, then, can only occur when administrators come to critically look at their often taken-for-granted efforts to impose their understandings on others.

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Chapter 62
Zimbabwe in Transition: Rethinking the School Leadership Conditions Fostering Transition

Chrispen Chiome and Mupa Paul

Introduction

Zimbabwean Education has been rated as one of the best in Africa. Latest reports indicate that Zimbabwe has overtaken Tunisia to become the country with the highest literacy rate in Africa, according to statistics from the latest UNDP Digest (July 14, 2010) Tunisia had held pole position for years with Zimbabwe second-best and number one in sub-Saharan Africa. Zimbabwe's literacy level jumped to 92%, up from 85% while Tunisia remains on 87%. The achievement is despite the country's education sector suffering from brain drain and lack of resources over the past decade, coming as it did at a time when the economy that was razed by hyperinflation is on the brink of recovery. The country underwent a decade of economic meltdown (2000–2009) in which the inflation hit the million mark. This resulted in the country losing its educated workforce to other countries to seek greener pastures. Education was one of the hardest hit sectors. One of the main challenges facing Zimbabwe is to rebuild the economy and with it the education system. In 2009, a fund, the Educational Transition Fund (ETF) was established to deal with the deteriorating working conditions in schools. Donor agencies, the government, churches and Non-Governmental Organisations had to put their heads together and craft strategies to resuscitate the ailing but once prosperous education system. The concept of Child Friendly Schools (CFS) (MoE 2010) was adopted as the philosophy guiding education recovery. The concept was then promoted through workshops. It is during these workshops that one of the authors, as a facilitator in the workshops, sought the views of education authorities that included heads of

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schools, education officers, district education officers and school inspectors, among others, on the kind of school leadership that is needed to preside over the transitional period. In this context, the chapter describes Zimbabwe's education system, highlights the prevailing conditions, discusses the importance of leadership and shares the views of school leaders in Zimbabwe on the type of school leadership needed to preside over the transitional period. School leadership conditions fostering transition were obtained through content analysis of the essays written by participants in the workshops on CFS in Zimbabwe between April and May 2010. This chapter is an attempt at enhancing the teaching environment for school leaders in a transitional period so that this can cascade into fruitful learning experiences for teachers and learners. Fullan (2002) has gone as far to conclude that effective school leaders are the key to large-scale, sustainable education reform. This is currently the case with Zimbabwe's education system.

School Leadership

School leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas internationally (Davies et al. 2005; Bush 2008; Fitzgerald 2009) as it plays a key role in teacher efficacy and student outcomes. Not only are school leaders important but also they are generally seen to be taking on more and more roles (Mulford 2003). Leadership is defined by Robbins et al. (2001:400) as the ability to influence and develop teams to achieve goals that contribute to a worthwhile purpose. Robbins and Coulter (2005) say leadership is the process of influencing a group towards the achievement of goals. Leadership is a topic that has been heavily researched. However, most of that research has been directed towards what makes an effective leader (Waters, Grubb, Robbins and Coulter 2005). There is little in the literature on preparing school leaders to face the challenges of transition like those facing Zimbabwe education today. They are overburdened with heavy workloads, they lead teachers who are being paid almost nothing, USD 150/month, the lowest pay packet for teachers in Southern Africa. They preside over children without books, who learn under trees. They are financed by peasants who are themselves almost destitute owing to the economic meltdown. The recruitment of teachers is done at district level leading to recruitment of incompetent teachers who fail to adjust to local conditions and are always on the move. The plight facing Zimbabwean school leaders is articulated by Southworth (in Mulford 2003) who argued that we need to be careful that we are not encouraging our school leaders to face the future by walking into the twenty-first century looking backwards. This is the case in Zimbabwe.

The importance of school leadership is highlighted by Davies et al. (2005) who provide a convincing argument that successful school leaders influence student achievement through two important pathways: the support and development of effective teachers and the implementation of effective processes. Senge, in Bamburg (2010), states that many of the problems that face organizations can be traced to the lack of leadership. Deming (1988) a leading advocate for Total Quality Management

(TQM) states that 85–90% of the problems that an organization experiences is due to a lack of leadership. Education is no exception. If any meaningful and significant changes are to take place in schools, it is imperative that those who are responsible for providing leadership in education possess the vision, knowledge and skills that are needed to bring about that transformation. However, this can only happen if they feel their working conditions are at least reasonable and if they possess the skills, knowledge and attitude that is critical in a transformation process.

Leithwood et al. (2004) outline three sets of key leadership practices that show that school leadership is critical to the success of the school in a transitional period. The first is developing people. In this situation, leaders enable school personnel to do their jobs efficiently and effectively by offering intellectual support and stimulation to improve work performance. The second is setting a direction for the organization. The most important aspect of this core leadership practice is developing shared goals, monitoring organizational performance and promoting effective communication. The third is redesigning the organization to create a productive school culture, modifying organizational structures that undermine work performance and building collaborative processes (Parks et al. 1992; Krovertz 1995). These aspects are indispensable in a school. However in a country like Zimbabwe which is in a transitional period, a one-size-fits-all approach may not work in schools with collapsing infrastructure, a depleted teaching force that has been grossly affected by brain drain and trying to raise the morale of children who learn under trees in schools without text books. The need to capacitate school leaders so that they are able to navigate their way in these murky waters becomes central to all government efforts. In this regard, these are concerns across all sectors of the education system. Very hardworking, competent, committed and qualified school leaders are leaving the profession in droves. Some are reaching retirement age and need urgent replacement, but are hard to replace because potential candidates often hesitate to apply, citing unattractive working conditions as one of the more prominent reasons (Leithwood 2006; Moller 2009). On the other hand, HMIE (2007) points out that effective leaders and effective schools promote and support innovation and change whilst evaluating and managing risks.

School principal leadership emerges in most studies as a strong influence on teacher performance and teacher efficacy (Mulford 2003; Intrator 2006; Grant and Gillette 2006). School leader characteristics such as influence at district or provincial level, being well connected, providing resources for teachers, buffering teachers from disruptions such as political victimization and ethnic wars, and allowing teachers' discretion over classroom decisions are associated with school leaders who positively influence teacher performance. In Zimbabwe today, these characteristics may not be possible owing to a plethora of challenges that affect Zimbabwe schools. These are a result of a decade long mayhem in the economy that registered the highest ever inflation of any country in history outside a war situation. This calls for a rethinking of the role of school leadership because the quality of leadership in any establishment is the key to providing excellent learning (HMIE 2007).

Mulford (2003) points out that society's most important investment is increasingly seen to be in through education of its people, arguing that we suffer in the

absence of good education and we prosper in its presence. In a situation where there are high expectations for Zimbabwe's education provision, school leaders have enormous burdens on their shoulders (Fullan 2002; Intrator 2006; OECD 2008). Principal leadership acts as a catalyst for collaborative structures and cultures that support instruction and student learning.

Why Rethink the Role of School Leadership in Zimbabwe?

Zimbabwe's economy has been on its knees for a decade. Education was one of the greatest victims. What used to be one of the best education systems on the continent has become the continent's laughing stock. However, the economy is recovering and so is education. But what type of school leadership is necessary to turn around the situation? A decade of economic collapse in Zimbabwe (2000–2009) saw the largest ever brain drain that left the education system in tatters. A UNICEF (2009) report on conditions prevailing in Zimbabwe's education system showed that there was a pupil-book ratio of forty to one in most schools, children were learning in dilapidated and very dangerous buildings, there were serious disruptions to instruction and teachers were earning a salary of about USD$150/month. These factors colluded to take the steam out of teaching and make the work of school leadership an unpleasant profession. No research is required to appreciate how conditions such as these get in the way of school leadership performance, impede school performance and erode teacher motivation. These and other transitional challenges, such as changing needs and the issues of de-skilling have important effects, usually negative, on teachers and students. It is important to rethink the role of school leadership in Zimbabwe during this crucial and demanding time because what school leaders do for schools, for children and for teachers depends on how they perceive and respond to their working environment. It is pertinent to make school leadership an attractive profession once more considering that many have decided to leave the profession with serious repercussions for the students and ultimately for society. Leithwood (2006) argues that districts, provincial governments, responsible authorities, teachers unions, as well as wider social forces, help directly to provide the working conditions for school personnel.

Leithwood (2006) argues that the material, social, cultural and technical conditions of work influence a very large proportion of people's overt actions, no matter the job or person, depending, it should be stressed, on their perceptions and reactions to those conditions. Such perceptions and reactions may include among others, the purposes they believe their working conditions are designed to serve or the credibility of their source. More specifically, school leaders can be affected by what they interpret as the motives of those responsible for their working conditions.

Wylie and Mitchell (2003:12) argue: 'Principals had an iron determination as well as being good communicators, with a love of their school and its students, and sound educational knowledge. They were also incurable learners. … They provided good models for their staff and most encouraged others in their school to

take on leadership roles'. However, the kind of leadership that is needed to preside over an education system that is in transition is not something covered by the literature. Successful delivery of a significant programme of reform in Zimbabwe will depend on high quality leaders, who are responsive to citizen's ever-changing needs and are able to work collaboratively to create public value. Against this background, the following section will present the methodology employed in finding the information discussed in this chapter.

The Study

Research Design

This study sought to obtain the perceptions of school leaders on how best to lead schools in a transitionary period. The research was largely qualitative because it employed personal accounts to collect data. Qualitative research focuses on understanding a phenomenon, a process or the perspectives and views of people involved (Flick 2004) using their own expressions. The survey used personal accounts, as these are suitable methods for collecting original data from a population too large to observe directly. For this survey, the researchers took advantage of school leaders and education officers from seven education districts who were attending workshops for mapping the way forward to implement the CFS concept (MoE 2010). The researcher, who was a facilitator in these workshops, provoked debate on the kind of leadership that is necessary in the transition period. Participants were then asked to write personal accounts on what they thought could be done to make school leadership bearable under the circumstances. Borg and Gall (1989) say descriptive surveys are excellent vehicles for the measurement of attitudes and orientations prevalent in a large population as was the case in this study. Robbins and Coulter (2005) say that surveys elicit responses from employees through questions about how they feel about their jobs, work groups, supervisors or the organization. One of the characteristics of the descriptive survey method is to investigate the present status of the phenomenon. This was the case in this study. The survey was chosen because it was seen as the best method for collecting original data for purposes of describing a population too large to observe directly, as was the case in this study (Leedy 1997).

Sampling

The population for the study consisted of school heads, school inspectors, district education officers and education officers in seven districts in Zimbabwe. To get the sample for the study, quota-sampling procedures were used to ensure that each category of school leaders had an equal chance of being selected for the study.

Quota sampling has been described by Bailey in Cohen and Manion (1997) as the non-probability equivalent of stratified sampling. It attempts to obtain representatives of various elements of the total population in the proportions in which they occur there. The categories in this case were the primary school heads, secondary school heads, school inspectors, education officers and district education officers. School heads are the equivalent of school principals in other countries. School inspectors are responsible for overall quality assurance in a group of schools and education officers are responsible for particular subjects in their areas of specialization, while district education officers are responsible for the performance of schools in their districts. The sample was made up of 225 respondents: 103 primary school heads, 70 secondary school heads, 25 inspectors, 20 education officers and 7 district education officers.

Data Collection Instrument

The study used personal accounts to collect data from workshop participants. All the participants wrote personal accounts of their perspectives of the role of school leadership in a transitional environment. The researchers chose this method because it gives the subjects an opportunity to reveal their motives or attitudes and to specify the background or provisional conditions upon which their answers are based (Van Dalen 1979; Wegner 2002). The instrument was pilot tested to 20 randomly selected respondents. Items that were not clear were eliminated. Armstrong (1987) argues that personal accounts are useful instruments for collecting data because they assign significance and value to a person's own story and the interpretations s/he places on their experiences. In addition, the personal account documents the inner, subjective reality as constructed by the individuals. The personal accounts in this study placed value on the respondents' own perceptions of their needs and how policy makers could make school leadership responsive to the changing environment. The researchers decided to collect data from four different groups of school leaders to triangulate data in line with Rossman and Rallis's (1998) assertion. Personal accounts gave respondents time and flexibility to write what they thought prevailed or could prevail.

Content analysis of the data was done using the thematic approach in which respondents' accounts were converted into themes. The responses were put into themes emanating from their views. The next section will look at the findings that came out of this process.

Findings on School Leadership in a Transitional Period

In the following section, the findings of the study are presented. They are organized according to themes that emerged from the responses.

Recruitment and Selection Standards

The school leaders in this study questioned the methods used in recruiting and selecting school leaders, pointing out that the current practice is outdated and out of touch with reality. It lacks rigor and as a result, too many undeserving school heads find their way into schools. One head had this to say:

> More often, school leaders are selected on the basis of political affiliation, connections and in rare instances seniority.

Another one added:

> Heads selected using unprofessional means may not be sufficiently qualified to lead school wide changes that we face as school heads today.

During this transitional period, Zimbabwean schools are guided by a new paradigm (Nziramasanga 1999) in which there is greater demands for financial accountability, an increase in community control through School Development Committees and increased pressure for student outcomes. In the views of the respondents in this study, such high expectations from the public need well-groomed school leaders. Unprofessional recruitment practices will as one pointed out:

> …do more harm than good to the reputation of school principals.

Their concerns about school leader recruitment practices is a result of increasing pressure in schools owing to the exposure of school performance to public scrutiny. Robbins and Coulter (2005) say selection is an exercise in prediction. It seeks to predict which applicants will be successful and they argue that problems might arise if the selection process rejects effective candidates or if it allows less qualified ones to pass through as was the case in this study. The major thrust of any reputable selection process should be to increase the probability of making correct decisions because recruitment processes can have a strong impact on school leadership quality (OECD 2008). Thus, action is necessary at the system level to ensure that recruitment procedures and criteria are effective, transparent and consistent. This will protect the reputation and integrity of the office of the school leader. To this end, school leaders in this study put forth the following recommendations that they thought will make school leadership attractive.

> Plan for leadership succession by identifying potential leaders on time and then give them opportunities to develop their talents. Proactively identifying and developing potential leaders can boost the quantity and quality of future school leaders.
>
> Provide more avenues that can be used to screen potential candidates such as competency profiles and put less weight on seniority that hitherto is the case. Eligibility criteria should be broadened to reduce the weight accorded to seniority and attract younger dynamic candidates with different backgrounds.
>
> Recruitment procedures should go beyond traditional job interviews to include an expanded set of tools and procedures to assess candidates.
>
> Provide guidelines and training for those on the hiring side of recruitment panels and encourage the use of recruitment tools that are used in the private sector that will enable authorities to assess a wider range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies so that the best prospective school leader candidates are selected.

The emphasis of the respondents in this study was on professional recruitment because school leaders are not only important, but are also generally seen to be taking on more and more roles. In this case, the education system needs to experiment with new approaches to school leader recruitment so that they can attract school leaders who will seek to run schools in ways that are right for a system in transition.

Pre-service School Leadership Preparation Programmes

Apart from university qualifications, school leaders in Zimbabwe have no basic training for leadership. Gumuseli (2009) argues that professional qualifications are needed to achieve effective management in schools. Information gleaned from personal accounts indicated that school leaders in Zimbabwe expect responsible authorities, government, churches and local councils to institute programmes of preparing school leaders well before they are considered for leadership posts. Some people do not have what it takes to be a leader (Robbins and Coulter 2005).

Leadership training is more likely to be successful with individuals who are high self-monitors than with low self-monitors. Such individuals are flexible enough to change their behaviour so that it fits the situation. Earley et al., in Mulford (2003) argued that the current state of school leadership in England is associated with the call for a coherent school leadership professional development framework which begins shortly after qualification as a teacher and continues through and beyond headship. Sweden has a long-standing four-step approach to principal training: recruitment for those who want to become principals, introduction for those newly appointed, a national programme after about 2 years in the job and continuation which comprises mainly university courses (Johansson, in Mulford 2003). The Hong Kong (Walker, in Mulford 2003) continuing professional development framework for school principals has separate programmes for aspiring, newly appointed and serving principals. Thus in Zimbabwe where the education system is evolving, traditional ways of preparing school leaders are no longer sufficient. One respondent ably summed up the issues in Zimbabwe:

> There is need to pay attention in a coherent and systematic manner to a period of pre-service as an important and distinct learning phase in the school leaders' life and work.

The question remains, however, whether excellence in teaching or mere seniority will automatically translate into effective school leadership. The respondents in this study thought not. To them leadership needs a different set of skills and aptitudes. The need to provide options and support for career development for school leaders is widely documented in the literature (Woods 2004; Davies et al. 2005; Moos 2008; Pegg 2008; OECD 2008). The argument is that there is a need to provide school leaders, both prospective and practicing ones, with competencies so that they are prepared for the rigors of school leadership. This can reduce to a large

extent principal burnout and stress and at the same time promote school leader self-efficacy. Fullan (2002: 20) argues that:

> We will not have a large pool of quality principals until we have a large pool of quality teachers…

He also argued that educational reform that targets school improvement

> …depends on principals who can foster the conditions necessary for sustained educational reforms in a complex, rapidly changing society.

Those in leadership roles seem to require two types of domain knowledge if they are to be successful in schools. One type of knowledge is about the content of the curriculum or subject matter, the 'knowledge of academic subjects that is needed by school leaders when they act as instructional leaders' (Stein and Nelson 2003). The same views are echoed by Stein and Spillane (2005) who argue that school heads need to be knowledgeable if they are to set the right stage for academic excellence in the schools. Prestine and Nelson (2005) are of the view that successful leadership content knowledge should also encompass knowledge of the content to be taught and the methods used to disseminate knowledge to students. They include the psychology of motivation as well. Robbins and Coulter (2005) argue that people can be trained to develop an understanding about content things critical to effective visions. Organizations can also teach skills such as trust building and mentoring. School leaders can be taught situational analysis skills, learn how to evaluate situations, how to modify situations to make them fit better with their style and how to assess which leader behaviours might be most effective in given situations.

The Rocky Road: Managing Transition from Classroom Practice to School Leadership

In addition to basic leadership knowledge at the initial stage of transition from one career stage to another, the respondents in this study were of the opinion that their most tiring time came during the transition that classroom teachers experience moving from classroom practice to school leadership, considering the change in professional identity and new expectations. They claimed that:

> In addition to the pitfalls of transition, we are isolated, lonely, lacking support, separated from teaching colleagues and distanced from the usual classroom practice.
> We are not suffering from the effects of an unprecedented economic meltdown only. The transition from teacher to school head adds its own challenges, difficulties and issues in a system that is almost collapsing.

Studies of transition from classroom practice to school leadership appear to confirm these concerns of Zimbabwean school leaders. These studies have indicated that the journey towards the school principal identity is a complex one often associated

with inner conflict and tension (Dinkelman et al. 2006; Murray and Male 2005). Wood and Borg (2010) added that transition experiences are associated with inner conflict and tension. They called these inner conflicts and tension 'the rocky road'. The school leadership role is a multifaceted one. Davies et al. (2005) argue that school leaders need to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers and expert policy initiators and implementers amongst other roles, yet the content of teaching revolves around 'personal values, beliefs and biographies' (Murray and Male 2005:126). Thus for the new school leader, this becomes the first challenge and the first pothole in Wood and Borg's rocky road. Coleman (2005) argue that in the course of the move from classroom practice, a change takes place that affects the confidence and professional identity of the new school leader. The respondents in this study cited many challenges that are common in Zimbabwean schools that include professional identity, isolation, new technology, new sets of skills, new challenges and lack of experience. Similar concerns on the change in the workplace and its associated challenges have been noted by others such as Murray and Male (2005), Berry (2007), Malderez and Wedell (2007). All these point to the need to manage the transition from classroom practice to school leadership if schools are to respond positively to changing circumstances.

Support at Various Stages of Development

The respondents in the study were of the opinion that they are recruited into schools and then left on their own. Some supporting statements are:

> We are recruited and then dumped in schools without furniture, textbooks or syllabuses.

> It's a mammoth tasked to be asked to run a school with such a high teacher turnover.

> There is need to be supported at every stage of one's development.

This situation, to the respondents in this study, exposed them to the harshest leadership environment. They suggested that they need to be supported through all the stages of their development as school leaders. The concerns of Zimbabwean school leaders appear to have an international face. Universities in Zimbabwe focus on preparation programs only, yet the University of Washington's Center for Educational Leadership supports school leaders at various stages of career development. The Center brings leaders together to develop their capacities through a variety of programmes including the three-tiered School Leadership Programme series, the District Leaders Seminar Series and the Summer Leadership Institute. The programme emphasizes social justice and equity for all. School leaders need time, capacity and support to focus on the practices most likely to improve learning (OECD 2008).

Leader Autonomy

School leaders in this study felt that they did not have autonomy that matched the responsibilities before them. Their work of re-engineering flattening schools could be bearable should they be given the power to make decisions on the ground. The areas they felt concern over included teacher recruitment, hiring and firing powers, capacity to recommend extra pay for those who meet targets and freedom to charge fees that are appropriate, among other issues. They need to do this without referring to the cumbersome bureaucracy that characterizes Zimbabwe's education system. One head put it this way:

> In these times of change, we need to be empowered to make decisions on the ground otherwise schools are slowly moving from panacea to scapegoats in a system in which we have no power at the point where the rubber meets the tar.

Eck and Goodwin (2008:1) appear to support the Zimbabwe school leaders when they point out that school leaders need a certain amount of latitude. Districts are therefore asked to hire great, competent and knowledgeable school leaders and then stay out of their way. An interesting analogy on leader autonomy is reported by Eck and Goodwin (2008) where in 2007, the American Institute of Research and the Fordham Foundation released a report titled 'The Autonomy Gap'. It argued that school heads shoulder much of the burden of accountability systems but lack the authority to really improve student performance especially when it comes to school staffing. In Zimbabwe, districts recruit teachers for schools because school leaders' powers have been usurped. In the Netherlands, for example, school heads are responsible for the quality of their schools as well as for all personnel matters including hiring and firing, staff appraisal and collective bargaining (OECD 2008). This is not the case in Zimbabwe.

Research has shown that school leaders can make a difference in school and student performance if they are granted autonomy to make important decisions (OECD 2008). According to Spillane (2006), with distributive leadership, the head teacher's leadership is rated as more supportive and directed towards instructional excellence and school improvement, the school climate is seen in positive terms and produces greater than expected improvements in student learning. This can happen because teachers are granted autonomy to direct school operations in ways they deem appropriate. Clinkscales (1997:1) adds weight to the call for autonomy by declaring that school leaders need autonomy in governance, budgeting, hiring, curriculum development and professional development. Riley and Louis (2000) argue that leadership is more than role based, but is an organic activity involving the formation of a network of values-driven relationships. Integral to the success of such dispersed leadership are both pupil and teacher voices. The argument for autonomy by Zimbabwean school leaders appears to be supported by OECD (2008) that claims that changes designed with little involvement of those destined to use them are rarely effective.

As well as autonomy, school leaders in this study wanted their powers to be increased so that they can have more power over school decisions that matter.

They argued for decentralization coupled with school self-governance. Education is highly centralized in Zimbabwe. Important decisions take too long to make when they have to move from school to cluster, from cluster to district, from district to region/province and from province to head office where the final decisions are then made. Gumuseli (2009) argues that there should be a clear and effective balance of authority and responsibility for school principals just like in other professions. In Turkey, it was found out that the authority of the average primary school principal was limited and their responsibilities were imbalanced (Gumuseli 2009). Granting power to school authorities empowers them to make decisions that matter in school operations. This will lead to more sustainable leadership (Hargreaves and Fink 2006).

Initiatives to Reward School Leaders and Raise Morale

One major bone of contention for school leaders in Zimbabwe is the salaries that are below the poverty line. These were said to demotivate and demoralize school leaders and impacted negatively on school performance. OECD (2008) is of the opinion that attractive salaries for school leaders will help influence the supply of highly qualified candidates for school leadership posts. In fact, a respondent in this study claimed that:

> …policy makers and responsible authorities must match school leader salaries to comparable grades in the private sector in order to make school leadership more competitive.

Murphy (2005) and Illeris (2009) are of the opinion that school leader succession can be a transition challenge if authorities fail to make better schools. One way to do this is for accountability to include incentives to provide positive reinforcements where improvement is occurring. Watson (2009) advises that if employing authorities do not take steps to address issues such as devolution, accountability, funding and performance monitoring, initiatives to support and reward principals in their role as instructional leaders are unlikely to succeed. In Zimbabwe, the education sector has been hard hit by the economic meltdown that triggered a massive brain drain. Some of the teachers and school heads have not yet found their way back to schools, citing poor remuneration. To the school leaders in this study, this could slow down the transformation of schools unless the issue of salaries is addressed as a matter of urgency.

School leaders in Zimbabwe also admitted that their morale is at its lowest ebb. Some of the issues raised were:

> We are hurt by pay cuts that the government instituted. This is an insult to our profession. The main reason for discontentment is the lower living standards. This distracts us from the business of the school and puts us in a bad mood. It's very devastating to our self-worth and at times we question our value to the ministry.

Literature is awash with reasons for raising the morale of workers. Good morale means many things in schools. It may mean willingness to achieve great things with

the school, willingness to achieve organizational goals, a sense of purpose consistent with the school mission, enthusiasm for the job, toleration of unpleasantness, reduced labour turnover, attracting personnel to the school and sheer happiness (Elmore 2000; Daresh 2001; Knapp et al. 2003; Levine 2005; Spillane 2006). Education systems value worker morale because of the wonders of high morale. It can be translated into increased productivity, high student performance and high customer value. Morale is also important in schools where it is difficult to monitor performance because good performance requires imagination and creativity.

Respondents suggested one way to raise worker morale was for school authorities to match the tough work conditions by targeting lifestyle factors. Lifestyle factors may include a holiday abroad, driving latest vehicles and golfing among others. It was argued that school leaders want to move with the times especially in terms of lifestyles.

Elsewhere, Knapp et al. (2003) report that school districts are struggling to attract and retain an adequate supply of highly qualified candidates for leadership roles. Peterson (2002) paints a gloomy picture on school districts that fail to attract and retain highly qualified personnel pointing out that in some parts of the area he studied, 60% of principals were to retire, resign or otherwise leave their positions in the next 5 years.

Studies of school leader supply and demand did not commence in earnest until the late 1980s (Mulford 2003). International concerns over school leader shortage did not become apparent until the mid-1990s and the concern was more obvious in the United States and United Kingdom (Copland 2001; Earley et al. 2002). The problem in Zimbabwe can be understood in three different ways. The first is the growing shortage brought about by the economic decline of 2000–2009, the second is the declining candidate quality brought about by the absence of systematic leadership preparation programmes and the third is the brain drain challenges that haunted Zimbabwe's education system during the period of economic collapse. Because of these challenges, the problems of attracting and retaining school leaders appear real. The concerns of Zimbabwe school leaders are not isolated. A study of 1,400 primary and secondary school teachers, principals and deputy principals in Australian state of Victoria in 2000 found that 88% had no intention of becoming principals because the working conditions are not attractive (Lacey in Davies et al. 2005). In the US state of Utah, the mobility rate of school administrators from one position to the next was almost as high as the attrition rate.

In some parts of Zimbabwe, the real issue is not so much about a dwindling supply of leadership personnel as one respondent in this study reported:

> I work in a remote area and in this area, it is not the glut in school leader supply. The real problem has to do with the supply of highly qualified personnel who are committed to work in rural areas.

This assertion is true because some remote rural areas in Zimbabwe are cut off from the rest of the world. There is no electricity or running water. In such a situation, the school leaders in this study called for the hardship allowance to attract and retain school leaders in those areas. Davies et al. (2005) also confirmed this issue

when pointing out that in California, for example, the problem is not the shortage of certified administrators but rather that of highly qualified administrators committed to working in underserved communities and schools. In some countries, schools have helped to upgrade social capital by involving the school in the community. Kilpatrick et al. (in Mulford 2003) show how important schools and their leadership can be in the revival of endangered rural communities in Australia.

Berry's (2007) tensions in teaching about teaching echo the sentiments of the theory of compensation differentials which argues that individuals consider both monetary and non-monetary benefits and costs associated with different jobs when choosing whether and where to work. What this means is that school leaders think of their total wages as a combination of what they are paid and the favourable and unfavourable working conditions they experience in performing their job. They attribute a positive value to a job's desirable characteristics and a negative value to its undesirable characteristics and then essentially add the positives to and subtract the negatives from what they are paid when comparing different job opportunities. The more options individual school leaders have, the more they need to be paid to accept undesirable work characteristics. Some examples of undesirable work characteristics in Zimbabwe include, among others, political violence, ethnic discrimination, on-the-job stress, health and safety risks, an unpleasant work location, an inflexible or unattractive work schedule (such as walking very long distances to compete in sports), a lack of autonomy and a lack of job security.

Stark-Price et al. (2007), in the research to find ways of recruiting principals to head schools classified as low performing, based on the results of standardized student achievement tests, found that in diverse geographic regions, the problem is that applicant pools for principal vacancies are shrinking. One aspect of applicant pool shrinkage that is perplexing educational leaders and scholars is that there are sufficient numbers of public school educators entering principal certification programmes to provide sufficient numbers of nominally qualified applicants for existing principal vacancies. However, the majority of these fail to apply owing to unfavourable conditions. Their Zimbabwean counterparts are proposing hardship allowances to lure applicants to these areas.

Reward Innovation, Creativity and Quality Outcomes

School leaders in this study were of the opinion that creativity, quality outcomes and innovation are critical in education. These have to be recognized, acknowledged and then rewarded accordingly. In this way, school authorities will promote innovation and creativity in schools that aim at quality outcomes. Rewarding innovation and creativity is in line with Vroom's expectancy theory that the strength of the tendency to act in a certain way depends on the strength of the expectation that the act will be followed by the given outcome and on the attractiveness of that outcome (Robbins et. al. 2001). The theory further argues that employees will be

motivated to exert a high level of effort when they believe that effort will lead to a good performance appraisal; that a good appraisal will lead to organizational rewards such as a bonus, a salary increase or a promotion and that the rewards will satisfy the employees' personal goals. Expectancy theory helps to explain why Zimbabwe's school leaders want innovation and creativity to be rewarded so that they will not do the minimum necessary to get the job done. This is important in Zimbabwe at a time of heightened expectations from parents whose children suffered the burden of high teacher turnover during the decade of economic mayhem.

At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe instituted sweeping education reforms that targeted development of the nations' social capital and supported economic and social progress. The emphasis was on a quantitative expansion of educational provision. However, by 1998, there was a paradigm shift towards quality education. The school leaders in this study felt quality outcomes in schools must then be rewarded. One respondent had this to say regarding quality outcomes:

> School authorities must move away from talking about quality and start taking action to nurture innovation and creativity and then reward quality outcomes in schools.

Other suggestions were that the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture could prioritize policies like giving best leader awards to outstanding school heads or rewarding school heads and teachers with a performance bonus based on their contributions to the school's quality outcomes. Better school leaders will be attracted to schools as their work performance will be assessed fairly based on their contributions and talents. There is widespread agreement that the role of the school leader today is directly tied to the quality of school outcomes and student achievement (Shields and Mohan 2008). School leaders in Zimbabwe, more now than ever before, are held accountable for every student's success because the identified purpose of school leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance. Research has also established that schools, students and teachers cannot be successful without a competent and caring leader (Elmore 2000; Moos 2008). Close monitoring of quality teaching was also said to be important to encourage emulation within the teaching fraternity but school inspectors did not have the resources to visit schools. The respondents argued that success of quality teaching initiatives must be supported. This helps to ensure that a quality teaching spirit prevails in schools (Shields and Mohan (2008) and will allow enthusiastic implementation of the concept.

School Head Is Not a Miracle Worker: Trigger Extra Mental and Emotional Energy

It was the contention of respondents in this study that there is a need to distribute leadership in schools so that leaders are not just at the top of a school system. They need to be everywhere. In the transition environment where principles, values,

beliefs, goals and interests are rarely consistent, there is a need to trigger extra mental and emotional energy:

> The magnitude of the changes that are currently taking place need collective effort in schools. The atmosphere for productive teacher empowerment must prevail.

Another argued:

> Leadership for transition can only come from strong and effective leadership which to me involves nurturing the leadership capacities of teachers and pupils so that they can make important decisions that result in school improvement. This extra mental and emotional energy is needed in a transitional period.

The need for leadership teams in Zimbabwean schools appears not to be isolated. In Denmark, Moos, in Mulford (2003), claims that the notion of the principal as instructional leader is foreign. Teachers have always been considered professional and autonomous both in their choice of teaching methods and in their selection of content of the curriculum as long as they adhere to the syllabus. In some countries, educators are trying to engage students more directly in learning, to make them co-workers with teachers in the learning process (Mulford 2003). For instance, in Sweden students have an increasing role in decision-making in the belief that they should take on responsibility for their own learning (OECD 2008). In the United Kingdom, Maden (2001) found out that it is tempting to dwell solely on the head teacher as a kind of miracle worker, because these heads know that, above all else, securing empowerment comes through the hearts and minds of teachers. Extra mental and emotional energy seems to be triggered by a shared sense of achievement, particularly if this is the result of the efforts of staff and students. This is particularly true in Zimbabwe where heads are expected to work in partnership with their teachers to improve the performance of children after a decade of economic decay, because teachers who feel part of the leadership of the school will help carry forward change with enthusiasm.

Excessive Workload

Evidence gleaned from the personal accounts appears to point out that the workload for school heads is excessive. One respondent wrote in her personal account that:

> The workload is excessive, given a chance; I will opt out of this mess. I did not have problems of high blood pressure before appointment as a school head. On top of this there are too many inconsistent expectations all directed at my office in a school without resources.

Understandably, this is a significant issue for school heads in Zimbabwe as they are expected to carry out a seemingly endless number of functions. First, the head is treated as a teacher and is expected to teach some lessons a week, then, he/she is expected to attend cluster and district professional meetings, health and sanitation related issues meetings, village development committee meetings and even political meetings to show solidarity with those in power. He/she is required to supervise

staff regularly and produce reports on a regular basis. In addition, he/she must look after the financial affairs of the school as the chairperson of the finance committee. The school head is also expected to supervise reconstruction of school infrastructure that may have fallen apart, source school materials, liaise with the donor community in an environment that is not simple, or consistent and coherent. This may lead to burnout, feelings of stress, plummeting school leader morale and an erosion of commitment (Connolly and James 2006; DES 2007). These sentiments were echoed by Leithwood (2006) who argued that teachers who see their workload as excessive will perceive these as unfair working conditions. Such perceptions, he argues, can have devastating consequences for performance. Matsui in Leithwood (2006) gives some factors that may be associated with excessive workload for school leaders. Time constraints are seen as clearly the best contributor to stress and burnout followed by excessive paperwork, a situation that is characteristic of Zimbabwe school leadership. Multiple role expectations may also lead to what Robbins and Coulter (2005) called role conflict, a situation that may add to school leader burnout and stress thereby frustrating transition efforts in schools.

Learning-Centred Leadership

The respondents in this study argued for a learning-centred leadership as a response to a system in which:

> School authorities have narrowed the definition of school success to one main measure, that of examinations. This has narrowed the purpose of school to that of ensuring pupils pass examinations. Schools have moved away from the culture of teaching and learning to the culture of teaching and testing.

The focus on examinations has been castigated by Leithwood (2006) arguing that an approach dominated by the establishment of student standards, widespread student testing of their achievement and judgments about schools and teachers based on results can have disastrous and unintended effects. The respondents argued that the current changes in schools are not permanent as schools are at the mercy of political changes all the time. Hence they argued for learning-centred leadership. The following statement sums up the mood in Zimbabwean schools:

> There are multiple expectations that are placed on schools. Worse still these expectations are not permanent as they are constrained by the duration of the political cycle and heavily influenced by the dispensation of the day. It can be risky to put all our eggs in one basket but to be continual learners.

The views expressed by Zimbabwean school heads appear to point out that in order to meet the heightened, multiple expectations now placed squarely on Zimbabwean school heads, schools need to become learning organizations (Mulford 2003; Robbins and Coulter 2005; HMIE 2007), consciously and continuously pursuing quality improvements through learning.

Schools as Multi-Service Establishments

One area that is of concern to school heads in Zimbabwe is the area of restricting what goes on within the school walls. One school leader put it this way:

> Increased funding for education projects is critical so that schools can be multi-service establishments incorporating HIV and AIDs education, youth projects, Early Childhood Development, non-formal education and gender sensitivity workshops.

Another one added:

> Zimbabwe is undergoing profound economic, social, religious and political restructuring and our schools must be seen to relate well to their surrounding communities. It is not a new thing in Zimbabwe for schools to act as multi-service organisations.

School heads need to revive collapsed structures if they are to take on board the new roles that they seem to preach. A UNICEF (2009) report confirmed that funding is one of the main reasons why education in Zimbabwe is collapsing. In this respect it has mobilized funds from various donors under the banner of Zimbabwe Education Transition Fund (ETF) to the tune of 78 million USD in 2010. However, the respondents in this study felt it is just a drop in the ocean as more funds are needed to enable schools to reinforce the long established tradition of working with the community to promote development. OECD (2008) argues that schools need to reinforce their responsibility for socialization, morality and citizenship.

Establishment of Partnerships

It was the contention of school leaders in this study that creating a network of school leaders has the benefit of providing a supportive environment for heads during this tiring transitional period. They argued that structures that they used to rely on, such as the Better Schools Programme, Better Environmental Science Teaching (BEST) and Network for School Leaders, have since collapsed and leadership forums are dysfunctional. They said a network will develop innovative ways of meeting school leadership needs. One respondent had this to say:

> School head networks can engage in action research around selected issues of national, regional or international importance that school leaders face today and then disseminate and share the results with other school leaders.

Another one added:

> If there is a professional, social and emotional network of school heads, the feeling of isolation that we experience will be reduced. School leaders will respond by staying in the job longer to see the vision reaching fruition.

The need for networks is not confined to Zimbabwe. Bouchard et al. (2002) reported that in New York and New England, principals established the Principals'

Leadership Network (PLN), a network of principals, for principals and by principals (Bouchard et al. 2002:8). PLN guarantees that the voices of the region's principals will be brought directly into the most current dialogue on issues facing school principals, help to formulate solutions that are practical and workable, and works towards helping principals become effective and efficient school leaders. PLN promotes the following goals among others:

- Create a regional forum 'for principals, of principals, and by principals', which enhances the values of collegiality, productivity and learning.
- Provide a peer-to-peer setting for K-12 principals to network and discuss instructional leadership issues openly and honestly.
- Assist principals and their schools to develop practical approaches to improving student learning in the current accountability-oriented school culture.
- Conduct action research projects with principals and their schools.
- Develop specific strategies for principals to use to communicate the essence of the new principalship and its needs to policy markers, political leaders and the public.
- Assist in the development of collaborative leadership that will include principals, teachers, parents, superintendents, central office staff and others.
- Provide vehicles for sharing experiences (Bouchard et al. 2002:14).

Leadership is a critical component of the transformation of education. The kind of leadership that is needed in an education system whose structures are dysfunctional and resources are thin is fundamentally different from what traditionally was the case. Among other critical issues, leaders need a network in order to transform schools (Bamburg 2010).

Capacity to Manage Diversity

It was the contention of respondents in this study that the role of school leaders is evolving every day. They argued that every day they are faced with a plethora of responsibilities concerning school management, community development, instructional leadership, accountability mandates and managing diverse populations in terms of religion, political affiliation, ethnic groups, class differences and cultural differences. One respondent said:

> Calls for a positive learning environment; innovation, collaborative climate, shared and monitored mission and quality outcomes continue to intensify.

Another said:

> We face a daunting task of marketing dilapidated schools without textbooks considering the existing negative perceptions concerning education.

They also mentioned the need for skills, knowledge and ability to manage more diverse student populations. Of particular importance are students with disabilities, when calls for inclusive education are becoming louder by the day (Eminović et al. 2009).

Bouchard et al. (2002) confirm that the normal demands faced by principals in recent years have become more and more complex as the populations they serve grow diverse. Effective principals of the past were problem solvers, good communicators, risk takers and good managers. Nowadays, the school leader, as the determining force behind the degree to which a school may or may not be deemed successful, is faced with a dilemma created by the emerging and expanding role of school head, a dilemma that significantly challenges the future of school leadership. Some of the challenges raised by school leaders in this study include lack of respect for the office, sustaining school-wide improvement, raising student achievement, public scrutiny, lack of parental involvement, poverty, girls dropping out, students with a chaotic mentality, limited resources and managing change.

Today's leaders must therefore build learning communities in schools, establish a vision and philosophy of excellence, create a conducive climate for change, shape the environment to one in which teachers and students excel and integrate curricular, instruction and assessment in a continuous improvement process (Bouchard et al. 2002; Pryor 2008; Fitzgerald 2009).

Professional Learning Communities

As expected from the literature, school leaders in this study were concerned about ongoing, relevant professional learning communities. They argue that establishing such sessions would pave the way for good networking practices amongst the school leaders, as they are of crucial importance for continuous improvement of education. One respondent argued:

> There is little in terms of professional sharing sessions going on in districts or regions yet instructional improvement in a transitional environment requires continuous learning.

Another one added:

> There is a need for political commitment to sustaining an ongoing professional learning regime conducted by highly skilled and dedicated school leaders to meet the challenges of today's world.

There was wide agreement in the Zimbabwean team that given the value of the school head's role, it was critical that ongoing sharing sessions to develop and nurture high quality, well prepared and committed school leadership cadres is prioritized if the envisaged changes are to get enthusiastic implementation. They contended that a quality school leader is the keystone to a quality school in a continuously changing environment. Ongoing professional learning has been seen by Davies et al. (2005) as increasingly popular in nurturing the talent in schools. In-service programmes to promote lifelong learning that are tailored to meet individual needs at different stages of development have been seen as critical to the development of effective school leaders (Peterson 2002; Young 2002). Allowing space for school heads to upgrade themselves professionally with subsidies or

grants for their courses or workshops will also promote a willingness to engage in professional learning and growth that is good for a system in transition. School heads will be driven by a passion to excel in their career and would work towards continuous improvement in their work performance.

The idea of professional learning communities is popular in some countries because of their effect on the continuing improvement of instructional performance, commitment and satisfaction (DuFour eta l. 2005). Forms of professional development contributing to sustained teacher learning include study groups, coaching and mentoring arrangements, networks linking school leaders together to explore problems of mutual concern and immersion in inquiry activities with students (DuFour et al. 2005).

HMIE (2007) investigated the types of professional development needed in the United Kingdom and discovered a shift from courses on leadership towards experiential development which takes place within the workplace. Some of their suggestions include learning on the job through shadowing, team teaching, mentoring, coaching, exchange programmes, peer observation, secondment opportunities and opportunities for team teaching. These could be of benefit to their Zimbabwean counterparts, for whom expectations have expanded, always adding to, and rarely subtracting from, a job description that now includes instructional, moral, managerial, participative and above all transformational leadership as the country moves from rubble to prosperity.

Changing Roles of the School Leaders: Leaders as Knowledge Creators

The changing role of school leaders, in line with the knowledge economy that is currently developing internationally, was prominent in this study. School leaders felt that:

> It is pertinent to act fast to make school leadership responsive to the changes currently taking place through equipping them to be knowledge creators as knowledge creation is crucial in schools in Zimbabwe today because in addition to enhancing the professional development of school leaders, it also helps to find solutions to day-to-day problems in the school.
>
> With a very good research base, the school leader will be able to create knowledge and at the same time increase their reputation.

Senge in Bamburg (2010) argues that recently a different perspective about leadership has evolved. This new notion of leadership is based upon recognition that not only is the world no longer a manufacturing economy; it is not even an information-based economy. Rather, it is becoming a knowledge production economy and the organizations that will be most successful in the future will be the ones that possess the capacity to access information and use it to produce new knowledge. Nothing more could be added to schools in a country in transition.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter argues that teaching, like practicing medicine is a human service career that touches other people's lives. In the case of schools, a school leader not only touches lives but also nurtures them, guides them and leads them to prosperity. Such a noble and vulnerable career if confronted by many odds and challenges, then it is the lives of others that are likely to suffer. Given such circumstantial diversity, there is a strong need for policy makers to rethink the role of school leaders in the transition period in Zimbabwe. This chapter argues that school leaders remain of crucial importance for continued improvement of education, one that had nearly collapsed owing to various challenges related to the demise of the Zimbabwe economy. Given this importance, the authorities need to move fast to support school leadership.

The research discussed here has established that education authorities should lure quality candidates for school leadership positions by following a credible recruitment and selection process. There is a need to go beyond the traditional job interviews to include an expanded set of tools and procedures to assess candidates. Succession planning is also a way of identifying and developing potential leaders, thereby boosting the quantity and quality of future school leaders. Prospective school leaders who are high self-monitors need mentoring to develop a trusted pool of leadership successors who will work collaboratively alongside experienced, tried and tested school leaders. Those eventually selected need to be armed with basic leadership knowledge that prepares them for the rigors of school leadership and then a transition from classroom practice to school leadership that is associated with inner conflict and tension needs to be managed properly. It is the responsibility of both the authorities and individual schools to recognize the uncertainty of the transition period and to craft and put in place strategies and processes that address this struggle and then make the work of school leaders bearable.

The study further found that school leaders if given support at various stages of their development and given some autonomy to make decisions (through hiring trusted, competent and highly motivated school leaders and then staying out of their way), then the 'rocky road' (transition) will be bearable.

Policy makers also need to pay attractive salaries to school leaders, reward innovation and creativity, reward quality outcomes, pay competitive fringe benefits and target lifestyle factors so that the package for school leaders is not a deterrent to education reform. For those in remote areas, a hardship allowance will suffice to attract competent school leaders and to raise their morale in a way that will translate into increased productivity and high student performance.

Schools need increased funding, reduced workloads for school leaders and promotion of partnerships that will enhance collaboration and minimize school leader isolation and burnout. A key driver is the desire to make things better for learners. There is a common sense of purpose needed to provide a range of ways that will make school leadership responsive to change. Improving the quality of education is all about nurturing leadership for learning which will translate into initiating

changes that improve the chances for all learners to achieve well. For this to happen leadership, learning and teaching should be at the centre of attention for all decisions made, with the need to provide a range of opportunities to help learners gain qualifications and experience that enhance their life chances and help develop confidence in their own talents and abilities.

The chapter considers that the development of effective leaders is critical to the success of any school because the quality of leadership in any school is one important key to the provision of excellent learning. Changing and challenging circumstances call for the need to ensure that schools are run by high quality leaders who are responsive to citizens' needs, are able to work collaboratively in a multi-agency context and are able to create public value.

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Chapter 63
Findings in Translation: Negotiating and Leading Learning Across Borders

Francesca Brotto

By Way of an Introduction: Lost and Found

In Sofia Coppola's 2003 film, *Lost in Translation*, the concept contained in the title is woven into the fabric of the film in a number of ways. The screenplay bears witness to how difficult communication can be across socio-cultural conventions and linguistic boundaries, with intentions and meanings being 'lost' to misreadings, as two Americans face the sense of being 'lost' in cultural dislocation and in their personal lives (Motoko 2003). Evoking these various ways of being 'lost in translation', the hit-line on the film's web page is 'Everyone wants to be found'. The issues are, however: who should do the finding and what finding is this? And what do 'finding' and 'translation' have to do with leadership or with learning or with the two together?

Translation is usually intended as a mediation of meanings between an original and a receiver language. In its Latin etymological roots, the verb form entails a 'carrying over', with 'translatus' acting as the suppletive past participle of 'transferre'. The Latin stem parts that European Romance languages such as French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish have preferred, 'trans+ducere', have to do with a 'leading across' or 'to the other side'. *The Original Roget's International Thesaurus* (2001) reports three meaning categories as being associated to the concept of 'to translate': to render; to transfer; to transform. A deeper understanding of what the three entail in English may start to unravel the whys and wherefores of the title of this chapter:

1. As 'render': put or turn into, transfuse the sense of, construe, disambiguate.
2. As 'transfer': transpose, transplace, transmit, broadcast, relay, carry over.
3. As 'transform': transubstantiate, metamorphose, change.

The first association refers to a *meaning-making* mediation process involving critical cultural awareness. The second carries within itself a sense of movement

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from one place to another, of crossing borders, of scattering and broadcasting – for our purposes, the agency and seed of *dissemination* as the 'dispersing' of learning. This leads, however, to an exchange of learning experiences when compounded with the first association. The third embodies a *change* process, also in terms of identity if we build on the other two concepts.

If we consider these three processes all together, it becomes possible to place them in a broader intercultural learning paradigm of cross-fertilisation, within which we may reflexively find ourselves through and with others and others through ourselves, with language and communication playing a key role in this scenario (UNESCO 2005; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 2009). 'Interculturality refers to the capacity to experience and analyse cultural otherness, and to use this experience to reflect on matters that are usually taken for granted within one's own culture and environment' (Byram 2009, p. 6). This enables us to act as mediators not only among people of different cultures, but also of different viewpoints, which takes us to the 'mega-ethical' level of moral leadership issues (Stefkovich and Begley 2007).

The *finding of ourselves and of each other* then is a long-term 'object' within which to 'dwell […], connect and reciprocate across boundaries' (Engeström 2005, p. 333) in our activities of international project work. As such, this object is fundamental for leadership practice, on the individual level as well as in holistic, conjoint leadership (Gronn 2002) within international project partnerships. It constitutes a resourceful space of inter-relatedness and interdependence for mutual learning, a 'between' space in the relational, processual and contradictory realm in which we form and reshape our identities and produce knowledge and understanding interculturally. This resourceful space is what spans leadership and learning, and it is how we 'translate' leadership into learning and learning into leadership, how we relate and what we do in this middle space that can create a bridge between the two.

In this chapter, of the three 'leadership fundamentals […] *purpose, agency* and *context*' (Dempster 2009, p.22) discussed elsewhere in relation to the *Carpe Vitam* international project[1] (MacBeath and Dempster 2009), the focus will be essentially on issues related to 'context'. 'Agency' and 'purpose' will also come into the picture, in the presentation of aspects of international projects which aim at extending learning both within the partnership and for schools. Examples will be used from a significant eight-country European project called *Bridges across Boundaries*, undertaken within the Cambridge Leadership for Learning Network activities, to further unpack the concept of 'translation' as a bridge and its relationship to leadership for learning in different cultural contexts. In particular, the three associated areas of meaning illustrated above will guide us through the three fundamental threads of the project, to unravel some of the understandings produced and results obtained within the life time of this 20-month initiative (June 2004–February 2006). Brief consideration will also be given to further activities and initiatives that may

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[1] *Carpe Vitam* was a 3-year international research and development project with a focus on the role of school leadership in creating a motivating learning environment. It was directed by the University of Cambridge and involved researchers and schools in Australia, Austria, Denmark, England, Greece, Norway and the USA.

have since been 'mycorrhized' (Engeström 2006) even in non-partner countries as far away as Peru through the energy it dispersed.

Bridges across Boundaries was a multi-actor project in which people from diverse types of organisations, institutions and professions related to education acted jointly and individually as 'cross-pollinators' for inner change in schools. A few associated examples from other international projects with other players will feed into the discussion as well of how international project networking can energise leadership for learning.

Interdisciplinary crossovers and liminal spaces have often proved to be fertile grounds for thinking. In order to explore facets of the leadership for learning potential in international project work, ideas and perspectives in this chapter have thus been borrowed from a range of fields, the main ones being cultural and intercultural education and communication studies, studies on multilingualism and translation, activity theory, social psychology, anthropology and other hybrids arising from the interaction of these.

From an intercultural perspective, then, it is important to stress that the finding of ourselves is only possible *through* others. Thus, international partnerships 'dwell in' spaces of betweenness, or spaces of mutual '*inter-est*' (Bahbha 2006), considering the etymological roots of this word. However, they also engage in 'passages' when we enter into a dialogic encounter with our partners on *their* grounds and they on ours. Let us then set the scene for the heart of our discussion with a story about a new 'passage to India' (see Box 63.1).

Box 63.1 A modern fairytale

Here's a very modern fairytale. Schoolchildren in Hyderabad are listening to magical stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' read by grandmothers and grandfathers – not their own, but from the UK, US, France, Belgium, Portugal and elsewhere. The storytelling sessions are held over Skype. (1)

'The storytellers are performing a unique social service for a digital age. They are mostly well-qualified, retired teachers, men and women, willing to give an hour of their time to read to children every week, says Sugata Mitra, professor of educational technology at Newcastle University, UK.' […] (2)

'There will always be areas in the world where, for whatever reason, good schools and good teachers will not exist,' explained Sugata Mitra […]. 'This problem is not going to go away or get better without intervention, therefore we need to be looking for alternative forms of teaching to ensure children do not miss out on a good standard of education.' […] (3)

'When I last visited India I asked the children what they would like to use Skype for most, and I was very surprised by the answer,' said Professor Mitra. 'They wanted British grandmothers to read them fairy tales, and had even worked out that between them they could afford to pay them the equivalent of £1 a week out of their own money.' […] (4)

Now, 11 schools in Hyderabad and a government school in Shirgaon village in Maharashtra are part of the self-organised learning environment

Starting with a Story: A Different 'Passage to India'[2]

This 'modern fairytale' in itself illustrates some of the beauties and implicit risks of international project activity.

To start with, it entails a 'coming together', having been compiled from both Eastern and Western sources: the e-paper version of the *Times of India* – Delhi

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[2]*A Passage to India* is the title of a novel written by E. M. Forster in 1924. It regards the relations between the British and the Indians at the time and the difficulties of establishing friendships across cultural boundaries.

edition, and the online science news source *Science Daily* operating out of the USA. It emerges from a simple project idea with a lot of foresight and an understanding of how things work in given contexts.

Coming in response to actual needs expressed by the main participants, it provides otherwise unreachable opportunities in these children's learning. It values their voices. It rewards a storytelling grandparent with an intensely emotional experience and with many new grandchildren eager to listen and react to these stories. As further evidence of its 'joining up' and mutually enriching nature, it attempts to bridge aspects of geographic, social, cultural, economic, linguistic, generational and experiential divides. By focusing on learning as a common field of interest, it shows that win–win relationships can be made across these boundaries, and that these experiences can be made possible through mediation and facilitation.

International project networking can be costly and resource intensive, impacting on its sustainability. This project is relatively resource light and survives in the midst of low resource capacity and stability.

There is an additional noteworthy element. The 'remote' space between the children's heads, hearts and minds and those of the 'real' life-size image on their classroom wall constitutes a fertile expanse for the playing out of endeavour and agency, intercultural interaction and negotiation of meaning, communication mutuality in knowledge building and sharing, with whatever means, with whatever differences. This betweenness or 'third space' (Gutiérrez et al. 1999) is authentic and open to the 'unpredictable consequences of the exchange' (Arnett 1992, p. 11). It involves chances and risk-taking, however big or small, for all those involved. It is where 'tensions' may rise and energy may spin off into defiance and defeat or into other forms of activity and collaboration, into other fields of discovery. It is a space that has implications for leadership and for learning and is an optimal space for their interplay.

At the same time, however, the story reveals at least another nuance that we should not ignore in dealing with other cultures, as happens in international project work. Although this project has the specific aim of offering these children in remote areas of India the possibility of improving their learning of the English language, it is important to note that the grandparent-teachers who have volunteered for the scheme, while not all based in the UK, mainly live in a number of Western countries, almost all in Europe. There may be convincing pragmatic supply-and-demand arguments that explain this situation, or other arguments related to teacher motivation in certain contexts, or whatnot. We may be convinced of the intense moral purpose of the venture and the utter goodwill of the agents involved. However, to paraphrase Gladwell (2000), in intercultural situations very often what really matters is what may seem to be a 'little thing'. As the project stands today (December 2009), to the eyes of more than one non-Westerner, this story may appear as a further tacit example of cultural asymmetry and unequal referencing power in international relations, where – paraphrasing Asante (1998, p. 71) – 'Europe is teacher and Africa [India] is pupil'. This is a latent peril in many international projects.

Even in Europe, there is no need to go far away from home to find examples of short-circuiting in EU project partnerships when even a prestigious institution

prevails as having a 'teaching culture' outlook (Weiming 2001) over the partners from other countries, rather than a learning one. Only awareness combined with sensitivity, a readiness to decentre our perspectives and enter into a dialogue with others and their perceptions, and a true desire to negotiate our understandings can contribute to easing the relational strain facing international project work in such circumstances. And this is another area in which leadership and learning may enter the dialogue and fuel it.

International Project Work

Before proceeding in the discussion, it might be useful at this point to make a distinction between international project partnerships (the focus in this chapter) and international knowledge networks.

In the former, actors from two or more countries usually enter into a partnership in order to carry out a series of project activities with declared objectives and outcomes within a limited space of time, meaning to access, or having already secured, the necessary resources to carry out these activities. Often these actors may have worked together successfully in previous projects and wish to continue their collaboration. At times they may come into contact because they have been recommended by players in other projects. In many other cases, prospective partners meet through open calls for collaboration launched across national or international professional networks or knowledge networks. In any event, the general focus is on the successful carrying out of the project activities as established in the partners' respective 'work packages', for which they enter into a binding contract amongst themselves and with their financers. New knowledge may emerge to feed back into the partners' own work and institutions and into their system(s) of reference, and it generally does. However, it is important to emphasise that knowledge production may or may not be one of the chief goals of the project activity.

Instead, Stone (2003, 2005), who considers knowledge networks as producers and transmitters of knowledge for advancement, understands KNETs, or global knowledge networks, as 'system[s] of coordinated research, study… results dissemination and publication, intellectual exchange, and financing across national boundaries' (2005, p. 91). Mutualising this concept onto a lesser scale of 'international knowledge networks', we may see them as 'organisational flows to coordinate research and analysis […] for more regularised interaction' (Stone and Maxwell 2005, p. 94), incorporating professional bodies, academic research groups and scientific communities in different countries, organised around a specific subject or issue of mutual concern. International project work may be one of the activities members of these networks engage in to further their knowledge production. This domain presents many issues that it is not within the scope of this chapter to pursue. However, two brief and interrelated questions may reflect back also on our understanding of some of the matters at stake in the intercultural settings of our international partnerships, namely: *Is access to these networks and*

participation equitable? Whose knowledge counts or counts more? These questions, of course, are closely connected to the agency the players in the international partnership will be able to express and also has implications on what sort of learning takes place within it.

Enter 'Bridges Across Boundaries'

The idea for *Bridges across Boundaries* (henceforth *Bridges*) originated in 2003 as an attempt to complement and follow up the original European Union pilot project on educational policy issues from the late nineties, *Evaluating Quality in School Education* (henceforth *EQSE*). This had been a seminal example of European co-operation involving 101 schools in 18 countries (MacBeath et al. 2000) and had helped to shape the European Commission's recommendations on school quality and self-evaluation (2001/166/EC). The new project was aimed at a 'further and more complex dissemination and exploitation of the experiences, findings, approach, method and tools that had come out of that work' (MacBeath and Brotto 2006). However, it is important to point out that, although the starting point was the original *EQSE* pilot project and its results, the dissemination process in *Bridges* was anything but unidirectional, as learning amongst the diverse types of players and for the general public was shared circularly and across. A sincere attempt was made to ensure that everyone's knowledge should 'count'.

In the new eight-country project partnership, the UK, Portugal and Greece had participated in the original pilot project while Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as new Member states to the European Union in 2004, had not. The Italian Ticino Canton of Switzerland also joined *Bridges* as a non-EU member. Although the new project had much less of a research focus than the original *EQSE*, a perspective of inquiry animated all of the players. Moreover, the topic of school self-evaluation proved to be a particularly meaningful one within the project partnership and the 40 schools involved in this journey of self-actualisation through others.

The three associated meanings of the concept of 'translation' that were presented in the Introduction to this chapter as elements of an intercultural learning paradigm may be used to explore the three processes in which the project activities engaged: a *meaning-making* mediation process, a *dissemination* of learning process and a *change* process. These were immersed, however, in a profound awareness of the need for an intensely sensitive intercultural approach in thinking, interaction and practice. Not only were different countries involved, but also a unique set of players with different professional cultures: researchers, education advisors, teacher-educators, representatives of education authorities, practitioners, translators and publishers in the education field, postgraduate students in education, pupils, parents, community sponsors and policy makers. These three processes ran through the project conjointly and cross-fertilised, although different players had different roles.

Findings in Translation 1: A Meaning-Making Mediation Process

The dissemination process of the project revolved around an 'artefact' resulting from the activities of the previous European project, which required mediation into other languages and cultural settings so that it could release new energy and inspire new human agency. It was a book, *Self-evaluation in European schools. A story of change* (MacBeath et al. 2000).

The book had appeared in English in 2000, to be followed by a German translation-adaptation in 2002 and the Italian translation-adaptation in 2003, and in the project it was to travel into other six languages by the middle of 2006 (Greek, Portuguese, Polish, Hungarian, Czech and Slovak). A further version into Slovenian was autonomously published in 2006 outside the project, a further testimony to the interest in *Bridges* that had emerged.

It was felt that the captivating, novel manner in which the book narrated and presented the story of bottom-up change in a school could be particularly empowering for practitioners in the partner countries, who were confronting different types of pressures to take on quality and performance enhancement in their schools. Partner countries joined the project on this basis. In his mission statement at the beginning of the *Bridges* project, the Portuguese project leader, for instance, spoke of the need to help schools develop their own quality development perspectives and practices, having 'something to contrast to mandated and formatted self-evaluation' (MacBeath and Brotto 2006, p. 21) procedures provided by policy. Three years after the end of the project, the Czech project partners speak of school self-evaluation having become a 'must' in their country, with the Czech schools that took part in *Bridges* finding themselves ahead and bringing inspiration to other schools on the national level.

Not only can we author texts, but language itself may 'author' us, thus making our agency possible. In this way the translators (all educationalists and practitioners in the project team) set about on a collaborative learning journey within the original text and amongst the various languages and educational cultures, their agency as 'go-betweens' impressed in the texture and voice of the new versions of the book. Here is what two of them reflected back about this experience (Box 63.2).

Box 63.2 The translators on the translation process (1)

Czech translator-facilitator/PhD student: I realised how easily one can 'get stuck' when doing a translation of a book that uses words and concepts that are unusual for the translator's environment and culture. And the only sensible way I can see to 'release' oneself from this 'burden' is through discussion and sharing experiences.

Portuguese translator: In translating, I thought it necessary to make the familiar look strange and the strange look familiar. This ambivalence (proximity vs. distance) [could] encourage readers to reflect on the Portuguese system, namely in terms of strengths and weaknesses.

> **Box 63.3** The translators on the translation process (2)
>
> **Czech translator-facilitator/PhD student**: I think some concepts that we are working with are typical of the English-speaking world. We should try to understand what this means.
>
> **Hungarian translator**: I think "education" for us means a lot of different things. We use the same word now in our conversation, but do we understand the same thing?
>
> **Slovak translator**: I realised I needed to consider new things – new pedagogical experiences and methods that were quite distant from my usual work [as a teacher]. […] There is also a problem of insufficient or inadequate expressions and phrases. I talked with teachers from school, the participants in this project. They find it very useful for school improvement and development. Our discussions were full of experiences and exchanges to share. I helped them to understand some of the problematic parts of the materials we worked with.

Translation may be a field for the playing out of power (Chakravorty Spivak 2008). The project instead aimed to make translation empowering, for those in the project and for the prospective readers of the books. Wondering about Anglo-American ethnocentrism (Dimmock 2002; Dimmock and Walker 2005) in some of the theories and practices they encountered, coming to grips with cultural isomorphs (Begley 2002) in their reflections on education, extending their fathoming of what 'next practice' (Prahalad 2004; Leadbeater 2006) in schools in their systems might look like – with the guidance of their project leaders the translators negotiated understandings that would 'fit' the contexts they were writing for but also reveal 'zones of proximal development' (Vygotsky 1978) for expressions of new leadership in schools in their countries. In Box 63.3 some of the translators' considerations on issues such as these are reported.

As the translation-adaptations progressed, parts were used by the national project coordinators to scaffold what the 40 schools in five of the countries were learning in their experimentation of self-evaluation. These lessons were then fed back into a brand new chapter of the books, so that through their own representations of their experiences, these schools in 'coming to "be" [them]selves' also took on a social and symbolic function for others (Jovchelovitch 2007, p. 3).

If 'science' may be seen in terms of a 'conversation' of voices belonging to different 'interpretive communities' (Czarniawska 1997), the discussion process through which the translators in *Bridges* interacted and negotiated meaning in the conversation – both online and in collective workshop sessions – may provide a stimulating approach for other international collaborative practices. Excerpts from the transcribed taped sessions have been used to decentre perspectives and fuel reflexivity in other international work settings in the field of education. An example is provided below (Box 63.4) of how a culturally-rich passage of a few minutes

taken from the transcript of the translators' workshop in Athens in February 2005 around the concept of 'academic achievement' sparked intense reflections related to both the content and the validity of the method in a different setting in Switzerland months later (Box 63.5).

The workshop in Athens featured all the translators, the key author of the English-language version of the book and project coordinator, a Czech PhD student working with the schools involved and collaborating in the translation, the Italian translator and project manager, and the Greek project partner and critical friend.

Box 63.4 February 2005 – translators' workshop, Athens

…**Italian translator-project manager**: So, the term *academic achievement* seems to be a problem in Czech and Slovak. There appears to be no term for this. From what you were saying in some emails, you use 'knowledge and behaviour' or 'study results'. This would seem to denote results only from the students' own studying if we back-translate. In Italian, there is *rendimento scolastico* – in the past it used to be *profitto scolastico*, meaning how much you profit from being at school; now with *rendimento*, it's like what you get from an investment you make. In the Italian translation, in parentheses *apprendimenti* was added after *rendimento scolastico* because right now the issue in Italy is about measuring learning outcomes in PISA-type standard testing. Since your countries take part in PISA, you might see how the PISA literature in these languages call *academic achievement*.

Czech translator-PhD student: even if we were to use the PISA terms, the problem is that people at school probably wouldn't understand them. There are also no defined standards at the moment in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. For example, although teachers are appraised, each head teacher uses his own ideas in establishing what good teaching practice is.

Greek translator: In Greece the term we use is related to how well you do in something, it's a very common term used at school so people understand it – similar to *performance*.

Hungarian translator: In Hungarian, the translation would be something like 'the fulfilment of curricular requirements' or 'meeting standards'. The achievements would be compared to the demands of the school's curriculum and the results are given in marks.

Czech translator-PhD student: How did you define *curriculum*? In the Czech Republic schools do not have their own curriculum, but only a national one[3].

(continued)

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[3] The Czech team member and translator-facilitator of the time, Jana Vašťatková, highlights the changes that have taken place in the Czech system since the workshop took place in 2005: 'today, in 2009 the situation is totally different – 'curriculum' is a commonly used word, we have a state framework and each school develops its own curriculum…nevertheless we are still missing standards in education'.

Box 63.4 (continued)

In the past the obligatory curriculum meant that teachers had to cover certain amounts of content in an established period of time. The curriculum was only chunks of knowledge…To get the idea across to the teachers experimenting self-evaluation in the project, the term we've used is 'marks and results', but this is still a problem area. Their measurement of learning as an "acquisition of knowledge" is through marks like in Hungary, but there's a different frame of reference. What students know is proportionally related to what they are able to show in talking about certain topics – this is often no good for creative learners or learners that use nonverbal learning channels. However, the concept of 'acquisition of competence' is coming in, meaning academic competence, as 'knowledge, skills and behaviour at school'…

Greek translator: In Greece entrance examinations to university, for instance, only assess 'amounts of knowledge'. If the students write their own opinions, this may be interpreted as an identification sign for the examiners – who must not know whose paper they are marking…

Seven months later the excerpt from the Athens transcript was handed out to a group of educationalists and researchers taking part in an international workshop during the congress held by the Swiss Society for Educational Research in Lugano, *Educational Leadership and the Changing School*. This facilitated understanding while the participants listened to the taped voices. The three concluding remarks to their discussion, featured in Box 63.5, all deal with the value (or lack of it) attributed to the intercultural exercise.

Box 63.5 September 2005 – Lugano (Switzerland)

…**ANNA**: I think it's a very meaningful piece which in a few lines gives the flavour of what an international discussion is. I was particularly touched by the fact that it grasps the core of these difficulties, like what teachers take for granted in certain contexts – like 'curriculum' – is not even conceptualised in others. According to me it is a matter of conceptualisation more than words. Anyway, I think that you raised a very important point Marc about the scientific value of the discussions, but for me it depends on the context of the use of these discussions…There are other words like 'accountability' – it seems like all the world is speaking about accountability, but in our countries like Portugal, Spain or Italy, no one really has an idea of what it means. So according to me this exercise is not wrong. I can agree with you [Marc] when you're talking about intelligence or some general content. Maybe we have to understand in what contexts can be worth a scientific agreed definition of 'intelligence' and in what other contexts are more important the cultural meanings…

Box 63.5 (continued)

BENJAMIN: This quality process we've been listening to is essentially about how we begin to understand other people's ideas. You know, it's the iceberg notion of how you can get to that lower level, to find a common language to discuss it. You can look at data and you can have some powerful data there, but you can't imagine how many times I haven't had a discussion like this with somebody, on like 'What does this data actually mean?'

CARLO: I've been wondering about how much reflexivity has been going on between us all only because of the experience of listening and following just 20–30 lines of others' discussion. It's incredible.

In a similar way, it may prove useful to start a meeting among practitioners or researchers (whether in an international setting or not) with a short listening-and-reflection exercise of a facilitated recorded dialogue – related to the concepts or issues at hand – among other people even from very diverse contexts but using the same language as the people in the meeting. In the author's experience, this induces an 'ironic' stance (Starrat 2001) in thinking, helping to single out conventions and reveal taken-for-granted assumptions in one's own culture and environment, while decentring and deconstructing perspectives so as to open up new conditions and 'middle' grounds for learning. To use Bateson's term (1972), this initial work on our mental 'maps' helps lay them bare, so that other representations can be constructed together, which is essential to the process of 'becoming intercultural' (Kim 2001).

Much of what has been said regarding the 'translation as meaning-making mediation' work of the translators in *Bridges* may also apply to the work carried out by the various types of critical friends engaged in the project. The critical friendship scheme linked different pairs of international project partners, as well as the project partners with schools on the national level and some of the school teams on a local basis. In this latter regard the Swiss partners, for instance, highlighted the need to set up clusters of schools sharing the same approach so that they could regularly exchange information and set up mutual assistance. Thus, the project provided many opportunities for peer and non-peer learning, revealing how crucial it is for the critical friend to get *into* the local culture, whether it is the culture of a given school or, as in international cooperation, that of a rather different macro-contextual educational environment, while at the same time maintaining a critical awareness. In this, the critical friend, similarly to the translator, acts in a liminal space of openness and 'mindfulness' (Ting-Toomey 1999), contemplating the coexistence of contraries and of multiple perspectives. An excerpt from the project notes (Box 63.6) written by the Greek critical friend in the project may illustrate the searching questions arising in such a circumstance.

> **Box 63.6** Some notes by the Greek project leader and critical friend to the Czech Republic and Slovakia
>
> Conventions in each school are culturally coloured (fear and hesitations of teachers in a new and promising process)…An open issue – the type of support: participative seminars; use of theoretical knowledge; prerequisites for school participation; the extent of a self-supporting scheme or intervention by outsiders; use of post-graduate students (with and without teaching experience in schools). What is the ideal size of intervention at the beginning and at the end of a project? Bagakis 2006, p. 15

Concluding the discussion on this first thread, 'becoming intercultural' thus entails the bridging of 'context' and 'agency', as fundamentals of leadership, but with a moral purpose that we can relate to the exercise of citizenship in a global world. The work of the translators and critical friends in *Bridges*, through the context-sensitive inquiry and human agency they expressed as individuals and collectively in a project aiming to enhance learning for schools in 'finding themselves', shows that leadership for learning must flow first and foremost within the project partnership itself if it is at all to be supported in the schools the project works with, as we can see also in the next two threads.

Findings in Translation 2: Disseminating Learning Across Borders

We can appreciate cultures only if we are prepared to learn from them and we *do* learn from them (Miike 2006). Boundaries, though physical, are also represented and symbolically defined by social actors, being constructed both from within and from the outside (Jovchelovitch 2007). In international project work, a knowledge and research differential may be perceived accompanying these boundaries. In some cultures, there may also be issues as to who is entitled to do research and to create knowledge, as for example the knowledge that teachers and students may create and wish to share with academics and policy makers. There is a question here of the locus of initiative related to the creation and sharing of knowledge, and therefore it is also a question of human agency and leadership (Swaffield and MacBeath 2009).

In carrying learning across borders, there is also often a language issue, which may bear in its belly a power differential conveying a dominant discourse. In referring to some fields of studies, for instance, Martin and Nakayama write: 'although it would be nice to move across paradigms with ease, most researchers are not "multilingual"' (1999, p. 10). They mean by this: versed in differing paradigmatic discourses. However, in numerous cases the concept can also be extended to include a deficiency of linguistic and intercultural competence, increasing the risk

of the person operating in a sort of cultural closet. This is a concern often expressed by the non-anglophone and non-Western world, the pre-eminence of English in international work being seen as possibly agenda-setting, discourse-hegemonising, ethnocentric, discriminating or voice-disempowering for all the rest (Asante and Vora 1983; Tsuda 1999; Dimmock and Walker 2005). While using English as a *lingua franca* more and more in international project work, we need to bear these risks in mind.

If international project work entails the collective action of all those involved, and 'one of the binding agents, or glue, for collective action is the sharing of knowledge' (Stone and Maxwell 2005, p. 9), then there is an issue of whose ideas get heard and of the voice to express those ideas. In *Bridges*, although the book and the results of the original *EQSE* project were available in English, they had been produced by a 'multilingual' team of researchers operating with project leaders and schools in 18 European countries through a bottom-up approach. In disseminating these findings into new contexts in *Bridges*, a dialogue was undertaken amongst all the project partners as to what was already there in their own experiences and policy scenarios, what their needs and expectations were, what missions they assigned themselves individually and collectively, with this dialogue also flowing into the schools undertaking self-evaluation. As the Hungarian project leader recalled at the end of the project, 'Hungarian schools have experiences in applying traditional methods and tools for institutional evaluation, like questionnaires, interviews, Ishikawa diagrams, KJ, etc. … instead [the project approach] is based much more on the common participation of the [different] interest groups' and was felt to be 'more communicative' (Baráth 2006, p. 8). The project website and final conference in English and in the national languages of the participating schools were fundamental in sharing learning and cross-fertilising ideas that everyone felt could be their own. One may add that a similar intercultural sensitivity in handling approaches, materials and tools is currently also being shown in a more recent project, *The International Teacher Leadership Project*, involving the University of Cambridge and the Greek partner from *Bridges*, together with other countries in Southern Europe (Frost 2009b).

More than three years after the project's final conference in Budapest, in impact feedback provided to the author *Bridges* is still recalled by all for its professionally collaborative atmosphere in the sharing of learning across borders. Moreover, the dissemination process, as owned by the various project actors, is still leading learning. In fact, all of the project partners have framed or reframed undergraduate, postgraduate, teacher and headship education courses on its outcomes. Dissertations have been based on them, academic circles, research institutes and practitioners refer to them and in Greece, Hungary and Slovakia new projects on self-evaluation and/or school leadership have built on the process. The new versions of the book have been influential in all the participating countries, and especially so in the Czech Republic, Greece and Portugal. Many of the schools that participated in the project are engaged in improving their understanding of self-evaluation, as are some of the translators. To give only a flavour of this impact, Box 63.7 features a few brief excerpts from the comments made in November 2009 by different members of the project team.

> **Box 63.7** Examples of the impact of *Bridges* three years later
>
> **Czech project team** (Milan Pol and Jana Vašťatková)
> The project has been a fundamental source of inspiration for two other books
> dealing with the topic of school self-evaluation [author's note: before the project
> there was only one book in Czech regarding school quality issues written
> only for academics.] The Czech project schools and teachers gained a lot of
> confidence and self-esteem which were highly important so they could share
> their experiences with other schools.
>
> **Slovak project leader** (Miloš Novák)
> [On the institutional level] the experience gained from the project is used in
> preparation for education of pedagogical staff in secondary schools, and in the
> education of school headmasters. Unfortunately, [on the policy level] apart
> from verbal attempts, the emphasis is based on outer evaluation and standardisation.
> I assume that the point of view…will change in the near future.
>
> **Portuguese translator** (Leocádia Guerreiro)
> The project increased my interest for deepening my knowledge in what concerns
> school self evaluation. To match that need/interest I'm enrolled in a PhD
> programme "Evaluation in Education – evaluation of Schools, Evaluation of
> Programmes and Evaluation for Learning"
>
> **Hungarian translator** (Béla Tóth)
> Translating the book (Self-Evaluation in European Schools) gave me a lot of
> new ideas for my teaching methods and (as a head-master) helped me understand
> my teachers' problems with managing their classes.
>   Another idea: I have decided to make a kind of bilingual glossary of the
> terms and concepts used by the book.

EQSE and *Bridges* have also produced unexpected offshoots, as contacts with
the *Bridges* project manager and the materials published on the *Bridges* website
together with the book helped trigger the *Proyecto Escuelas de Avanzada*. This
project engages about 30 schools, set in poverty-ridden areas of Peru affected by
lead pollution and severe learning difficulties, in school improvement through self-
evaluation and distributed leadership. Within the Peruvian undertaking, chapters of
the book have been translated into Spanish to facilitate the work of the schools
involved. In another case in Italy, also a country not in the project, other school
improvement initiatives in several regions led by a variety of public and private
institutions have not only been inspired by *EQSE* and *Bridges*, but one of them in
Piedmont even radically changed its initial course of action from a hard top-down
approach to an understanding of how to sustain the self-empowerment of the teach-
ers concerned (POLIEDRA 2008).

Implicit in partnership are recognition, understanding and appreciation. To
conclude this thread, perhaps a few lessons learnt from the author's own experience

in leading and supporting international project work over the years may be of interest to the reader. They involve a framework of 5 'e's' that bear upon the agency of the players in the partnership: *entitlement*, *enablement*, *engagement, empowerment* and *enactment*

The guiding principle of the first – *entitlement*– demonstrates itself through the mutual recognition for all those involved of the right to access, to information, to voice, to activity and error, to knowledge production and sharing, to interpersonal and social boundaries, to respect and representation (De La Garza 2000). The other four can come forth if the first is in place, being nested as they are within each other.

In the previous thread of our discussion, the role of language in 'authoring' its users was underscored. Once again it is important here to highlight that 'we create the world we experience through the language in which we recognise it and in our reflections' (Moos 2008, p. 232). Hence, once everyone's right to voice and activity is recognised, voice and activity require a shared language and tools with which to express themselves, thus *enabling* their exercise. The shared language and tools, however, may not all be there, and may emerge as the project unravels.

Enablement, engagement, empowerment and *enactment* can then be mutually fostering and lead to focused action, indeed to the exercise of leadership. Participating in an empowering dialogue among the different cultural visions and ways of thinking, understanding and knowing within the partnership (Tanno 1997), giving over power by openly discussing mutual frames of reference, sharing it by creating opportunities for distributed and conjoint action, joining in the representation of the symbolic spaces of the partnership's cooperation, taking part in the construction of its narratives are some of the means by which these latter four 'e's' may 'interact'. And the success of an international project often hinges on this interaction.

Findings in Translation 3: A Change Process and a Changing Process

In Ivo Andrić's novel *The Bridge on the Drina* (1945), it is the existence of the bridge that provides the location on each bank where people then build their villages. The bridge itself creates an in-betweenness that changes constantly over the course of four centuries. This is not because it spans the river separating the Serbian Orthodox village from the Bosnian Muslim, but because it reveals a hybrid space, an 'interrogatory, interstitial space' (Bahbha 1994, p. 3) binding and relating the two cultural communities. That is to say, the bridge changes along with the meanings it displays and conveys, and even more so as the contexts change.

The *Bridges across Boundaries* project was meant to disseminate and exploit the work of a previous project, in the terms of a 'developmental transfer', as illustrated above. However, the main artefact bridging the disparate educational communities in the project was the book being rendered into its various semblances. Moreover, its boundary workers and crossers (Tuomi-Gröhn 2005; Yamazumi 2007)

were essentially project partners engaging in critical friendship across and within their communities, practitioner-translators, and people in schools discovering new perspectives on school life, engaging in unfamiliar relationships with each other, trying out tools to 'know themselves' and devising new ones to suit their needs. Thus, their inquiry, as an 'interrogatory, interstitial space' had them make and remake the bridge.

The 'changing of the bridge', as an emergent activity and practice, is something one needs to be prepared for in intercultural and international work. Indeed, in some circumstances it is the very condition by which the relationship among the people involved can gel. The 'emergent' nature of international project work exploring leadership for learning is well testified by the *Carpe Vitam* project mentioned earlier (MacBeath and Dempster 2009), but even small European projects among schools often develop their focuses, processes and practices while they interact. In Box 63.8 two examples from school interviews and narratives of international

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Box 63.8 Emergent focuses, practices and realisations in small European school projects

Willa, teacher at Spring secondary school (Belgium): EU Socrates Comenius school project 2001

I thought we were going to study and compare aspects of our culture with our partner schools in Italy and Sweden. You know, traditions, eating habits and things like that. We prepared some materials about what we have in our town in Flanders before the meeting. But then when we met, we understood that there was another type of culture that our partners were interested in. It regarded how we do things at school and how we feel there. The other colleague and I didn't think that was culture. I had no idea about how to do that. But then little by little, with the help of our partners and the students, we found a first way: class portraits, school portraits, teacher portraits to exchange, that the students were going to do, using various techniques. I was challenged but a little afraid. I wondered how the rest of the school would react to this.

Class 4C, Friendship primary school (Italy): EU E-twinning school project 2009

[…] With January came so many activities. We found that so many things could be made into something to learn with other classes in Europe: characteristic places in our towns, the park, nature, Europe itself, ourselves, our games, things we say… The important thing is to learn and what we learn we can share with children from Romania, France, Germany, Norway, Belgium, Greece, Slovakia, Portugal, Ireland, Spain, Bulgaria, Poland. Everything we do can shine with a new light, can have a new meaning because we have partners to discover it with.

Box 63.9 Impact on Polish schools

Polish schools involved in *Bridges* report:

- Changed attitudes in teachers and an enhanced awareness of their own actions,
- New skills and self-evaluation techniques,
- The creation of a more democratic environment in the schools,
- Students empowered and involved in how schools work,
- Openness and transparency in school life,
- Local communities more interested in supporting their schools,
- Opportunities for direct feedback to schools on their work.

(Mazurkiewicz 2006, p. 6)

projects illustrate the emerging focuses and activities of the work undertaken and the realisations accompanying them.

As a change process, the 'translation' or 're-interpretation' of themselves that the 40 schools involved in *Bridges* undertook may be synthetically conveyed by what the Polish project leader presented as the outcomes of the project activity in his country. As formulated in Box 63.9, the Polish team had found changes both inside and outside the walls of the schools they worked with.

The Swiss project team, however, also warned against the risk of only decorative changes being implemented, rather than the schools striving for a culture of authentic improvement and stakeholder participation that could effectively influence the learning and teaching processes and school life (Berger 2006).

'Leadership is virtually by definition concerned with change' (MacBeath 2006, p. 164). The change process one has been looking at not only in this but in all three threads of the analysis has something to do with what Freire and Shor call the 'responsibility of recreating ourselves in society' (1987, p. 77), a society that is undeniably multicultural. As this change has been represented in the discussion, it is also intimately related to an iterative finding of ourselves individually and socially through what we can learn in international project work. 'One becomes human only in the midst of others' (Asante 1998, p. 200) or, as a teacher once remarked during an international workshop, 'the shortest route towards our own selves takes the long way round – through others'. This teacher was implicitly referring not only to the self-reflecting images she had captured in her encounter with colleagues from other countries. Through what appeared as culturally 'distant' visual materials that the anthropologist facilitators of the workshop had brought in to aid the decentring process, she had been able to triangulate her perspectives and discover the richness of 'middle spaces' of mediation and understanding. The author of this article was that teacher.

The Space Between and the Treasure Within

As this chapter approaches its close, a final thought may be crystallised foregrounding the hybrid space that could be of particular 'interest' for discourses related to leadership and learning, or to cultures and learning, or to the interrelation of these. The fabric into which the threads of our reasoning have been woven has continuously revealed that 'third' spaces form the warp holding the variously-coloured threads together, whether these colours have regarded leadership, learning, interculturality or translation.

Indeed, the Italian epistemologist Silvano Tagliagambe (2007) describes these 'intermediate spaces' as non-places constituting the only true position within which non-banal or 'interesting' communication may be negotiated and may dwell and, as such, the optimal space for translation and for the exercise of freedom and political action in its highest sense:

> The inhabitants of Utopia believe they are the bearers of the only possible and effective wisdom, of the only way to understand the world and its mysteries. For this reason, they are prone to *assimilating* other cultures, rather than working towards an *understanding* of them. Utopia, as a consequence, expresses an attempt to impose a vision of the world, to colonize other cultures… Only if we start by considering the problems related to translation can we fathom a new kind of "humanism" in pluralism that does not reduce the dignity of differing voices to a tolerance that risks turning into assimilation. A logic of translation can thus be proposed as the reversal of the logic of Utopia. (Tagliagambe 2007)

Ideas such as these resonate with a point one has tried to articulate in various moments of this chapter: if our international partnerships and projects are to be 'leaderful' and 'learningful' together, if they are to bear witness to the centrality of human agency set in moral purpose, the value of a perspective with a context-sensitive outreach recognising the great strength of creating these symbolic middle spaces, and the great risks of not engaging with them, cannot be understated.

One may even go so far as to extend this statement to *any* type of human partnership, since being able to 'inhabit' such uneasy middle spaces has become an integral part of our understanding of citizenship in today's world. That is to say, perhaps there is a call for 'translation' involving us all. In this, the reader may certainly imagine some of the implications for school leaders committed to an agenda of social and racial justice, learning for all, and genuine change in our local but global multicultural societies (Osler and Starkey 2005). Moreover, an awareness by school leaders of the macro-contextual, global forces and issues that contribute to shaping the school policies they have to deal with on home ground may help them better understand the stakes they are up against in their daily activity (Barzanò 2008) and the tensions these may generate. It may also help them locate the intermediate spaces within their school's cultures that can take in and 'translate' at least some of the tensions into something 'learningful' and meaningful for the school community.

However, to continue exploring our understandings of these expanses, one needs to emphasise that, conceptually speaking, these 'between' spaces have little to do with the immediate associations of 'overlap' or 'being in the same boat' of commonality that may come to mind, both of which may simply be a premise for the

Fig. 63.1 Overlap: banal communication
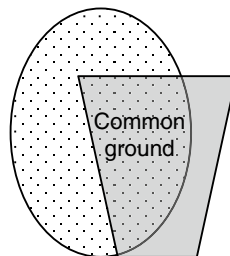
Fig. 63.2 All in the same boat: banal communication
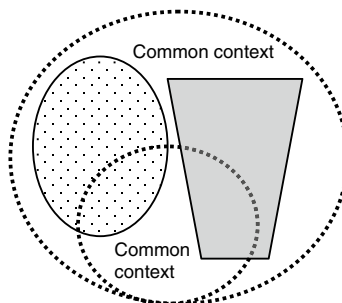
Fig. 63.3 Investing ourselves: interesting and enriching communication
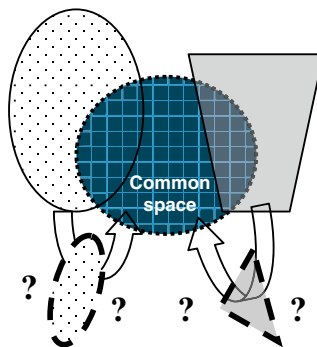
assimilation of one element (or culture) by the other. Rather, as the three figures above illustrate, adapted from an idea by Tagliagambe (2007), the type of interrelation being discussed here is far more searching and engaging, is much less definable and has fuzzy boundaries, being the ever-changing outcome of our trials and errors in encountering each other and in understanding our own selves as well as others in the process.

Figure 63.1 shows an area of overlap between the two entities or systems, a common ground or field of activity, for instance. In Fig. 63.2, two different sets of common contexts are represented in which these entities operate wholly or in part. In Fig. 63.3, instead, the common space results from a process of continued

negotiation of and attempts at contributions, requiring a true 'investment' of themselves by the parties concerned.

If we stop to think for a moment, we may also realise that some of the important tenets that have nurtured ideas of leadership for learning inhabit 'between' spaces as well. They are the spaces of 'emerging knowledge' (Arnett, 1992), of 'distributed cognition' and 'distributed intelligence' (Perkins 1996, 2003), of the 'connected intelligence' and 'connective energy' (de Kerckhove 1997) of virtual and human networking, of 'bridging social capital' (Putnam 2000), of 'interacting activity systems', 'interagency', and 'conjoint agency' (Engeström 2001; Yamazumi 2006), of 'distributed leadership' (Spillane 2006), to name some. 'Democratic Bildung' (Moos 2008) can more easily flourish in such spaces and, indeed, in the tiered learning model developed in the *Carpe Vitam* project, it is leadership itself that moves between: 'Leadership is the connecting tissue that infuses learning at every level and makes the connections a practical reality' (Swaffield and MacBeath 2009, p. 45).

But the 'space between' is also where our identities, roles, practices, languages, artefacts, … – in short, cultures – hybridise and expand. To borrow a phrase from feminist art and performance studies, it is 'a space we might call the tension of the present tense' (Phelan 1999, p. 224).

Conclusion

Within the Cambridge Leadership for Learning Network activities, *Bridges across Boundaries* acted in a smaller geographical arena with respect to the *Carpe Vitam* project mentioned time and again in this chapter, but both projects shared a keen focus on exploring the dialogue possible within the differing educational communities taking part in their initiatives. To the five key features characterising the methodology developed by the *Carpe Vitam* team, 'given the diversity and complexity of the cultural settings' (Frost 2009a, p. 64) involved, *Bridges* might contribute a sixth. An international project methodology focusing on leadership for learning may be 'federalist, eclectic, emergent, practice-focused and educative' (Frost 2009a). It might also be 'intercultural', in that it regards 'the cooperative endeavour to extend and deepen the understanding of one's own theories and practices in relation to that of others' (Schratz 2009, p. 283).

Tradurre è tradire, the Italians say: 'translation is betrayal'. Although in technical and cultural terms, we all know this to be true at least to some extent, this chapter has tried to deconstruct what is behind the concept and actions of 'translation' as a metaphor of international project activity, wishing to unwrap its potential for an intercultural way of negotiating and leading learning across borders. In doing so, European and non-Western perspectives have been triangulated with the discussion, so as to reveal third 'resourceful spaces' where our nested and interplaying contexts and cultures may provide rich grounds for learning, for human agency and for their bridging, whether in large-scale international work or in individual schools.

Thus, a logic of translation, 'the reversal of the logic of Utopia' as recalled above, set in a crosspollination of our shared endeavours, however big or small, may better equip us to work in the emergent 'possible worlds' of our diverse and intertwining realities and help us communicate and lead learning in them in mutually enriching ways.

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Chapter 64
School Culture and Pupil Performance: Evidence from Lesotho

Vitallis Chikoko and Amelia Tantso Rampai

Introduction

School culture is a significant factor in the performance of a school (Moloi 2002). In this chapter, we report on a study that explored school cultures associated with high learner academic performance in two selected primary schools in Lesotho. Here, we use the word "learner" as a synonym of "pupil" or "student". We obtained evidence from schools rated as high performers in terms of their academic results. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What school culture(s) do the two selected schools practise?
2. How do these schools sustain their cultures?

From the findings of this study, this chapter attempts to answer one question: What are some of the implications for leadership for learning?

In this chapter, we also address eight issues. First, we give some background to the country Lesotho, its education system and the study. We then move on to examine literature on the concepts "culture" and "school culture". This is followed by a section on theories of school culture. Next, we highlight features of a sound school culture. We then move on and describe the research methodology. After this we report on the findings and then move on to summarising what cultures the two schools exhibit. This is followed by a discussion on what we see as implications for leadership for learning after which we conclude the chapter.

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Background to Lesotho, Its Education System, and the Study

Lesotho is a small and economically poor country in Southern Africa. It covers an area of 30,355 km^2 of which one-third consists of lowlands and the rest, mountains (Lemena 2000). It has a population of about 1,872,721 (Lesotho Bureau of Statistics 2006). Geographically Lesotho is totally surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Some studies (e.g. Sebatane et al. 2000) have shown that due to poverty many children are over-age before they are sent to school, or that they are not sent to school at all. Thus many Basotho (people from Lesotho) adults are either illiterate or lowly literate. As a result, most of them are either unemployed or underemployed, and they have historically been unable to pay for their children's education. Due to very limited employment opportunities in their own country, many Basotho men have for many years worked in South African mines as migrant labourers. But the downturn in the world economy in the 1990s led to a decline in the price of gold and the closure of some of the mines. As a result most Basotho lost their jobs through retrenchment, raising the levels of poverty in the country (Ramaqele 2002). This in turn saw a rapid increase in the numbers of parents who could not afford to pay for the education of their children either at primary or secondary level. This then resulted in increased drop-outs particularly in primary schools as well as child labour.

The problem of child labour became felt not only in Lesotho but also in other Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) member countries. In this connection, SADC Convention 182 indicates that, in 1996, SADC member states held a meeting and discussed the issue of child labour in the region. They agreed that studies should be conducted to establish the factors that contributed to child labour. Findings indicated that poverty and the spread of HIV/AIDS were the key contributing factors. Similarly, Lewin et al. (1994) report that the main reported reason for drop-outs and child labour in China was family economic difficulties. Before the studies were conducted in all SADC member states, the estimated percentage of children aged 10–14 who formed part of the working population in Lesotho was 19% (Convention 182). This had become a crisis and so the country had to craft policy measures to address this problem. Thus the Lesotho government introduced the policy of Free Primary Education (FPE) in the year 2000. This was to address the combination of problems: the fast increasing number of illiterate citizens, the number of school drop-outs and child labour. FPE would also be in keeping with the Government's position that "primary education is compulsory and available to all" (Lesotho Government Gazette 1993, p. 42) although Mulkeen and Chen (2008) have argued that while primary education was declared free, it was not made compulsory. In support of FPE, UNICEF/Lesotho (2009) indicates that free education gives children orphaned by HIV/AIDS a chance for a better life. Similarly, UNICEF/Burundi 2009 states that, due to the challenges of HIV/AIDS and poverty, school fees were a significant barrier in keeping children out of school, and the policy of "Free Primary Education for all children" opened schools for those children.

FPE, though good, has brought about some challenges. Since the year 2000 when it was introduced, schools are experiencing huge enrolments and classrooms are overcrowded, while educational resources are inadequate. Teachers struggle with attempts at bringing about school improvement and effectiveness. This is especially the case because Lesotho's education system is examination-oriented. In most primary schools, one teacher teaches as many as 11 subjects on his or her own (Mulkeen and Chen 2008). During the years 2004–2006, the Examination Council of Lesotho's (ECoL) statistical records of Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) results show a gradual decline in academic performance. The overall pass rate of all Lesotho primary schools in the three consecutive years was as follows: in 2004, 88.1% of learners passed; in 2005, 85.4% passed and in 2006, 80.2% passed (ECoL 2006). "Passing" the PSLE means a student has completed the primary level course successfully and achieved a minimum pass in three subjects: English, Mathematics and Sesotho, and has achieved at least 30% in ancillary subjects. Interestingly, even against the reported consistent decline and although the situation is so demanding for teachers, some schools are steadily coping and are performing very well in terms of their academic results. The question for the study was therefore how these schools managed to do this. What cultures did these schools practise? Values, beliefs and norms need to be considered by any school seeking to improve its performance (Prosser 1999; Fink 2000; Moloi 2002). In similar vein, Hargreaves and Hopkins (1993, p. 229) argue that, "the good school is one that can demonstrate quality in its aims, in oversight of pupils, in curriculum design, in standards of teaching and academic achievement".

The Lesotho school system is made up of three levels. Primary school is seven years in duration (Standards 1–7). Secondary school comprises two phases: a 3-year junior secondary school (Forms A–C) and a 2-year senior secondary or high school (Forms D–E).

The Terms "Culture" and "School Culture"

Most literature (e.g. Ogbonna 1993; Fink 2000; Smith and Roodt 2003; Dimmock and Walker 2005; Bush and Middlewood 2005) views culture as composed of the beliefs, values and norms of a particular group. In this connection, Smith and Roodt (2003, p. 61) explain the components of culture as follows:

> Values represent the principles and standards valued by organizational members. Values are the foundation as to what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Values, though not obvious, operate uppermost in members' minds. Organizational members are able to recognize their values when challenged by others…Norms are related to values. Norms provide the unwritten rules that indicate expectations in terms of actions applicable in a number of situations. Norms within the business environment include appropriate dress codes…Values indicate what is important to organizational members and norms help to indicate what expectations are among organizational members…Beliefs are what people believe to be true or real.

Bush and Anderson (2003) describe culture as "the way we do things around here", that is, the way of life of a particular group of people. Renchler (1992, p. 4) says "values are the bedrock of any institution. They articulate the essence of the organisation's philosophy about how it goes about achieving success". Thus school culture can be defined as the way things are done in a particular school. Each school has its own values, norms and beliefs. In a school culture, whether sound or unsound, there are sub-cultures that make up the bigger culture. Thus, we talk of school cultures.

Some Important Theories of School Culture

In this section, we review theories of school culture that would help us understand the role of school culture in Lesotho primary schools with regard to academic performance. The way things are done in a particular school influences the academic performance of that school (Bush and Anderson 2003). Similarly, Liebenberg and Barners (2004) indicate that culture determines the success or failure of the organisation.

Culture is understood in terms of two domains namely "social control" and "social cohesion" (Stoll 1999; Fink 2000; and Stoll and Fink 1996). Social control is concerned with the task-oriented behaviour of organisational members. It is to do with concern for the quality of work in the organisation. The ideal social control is when there is high quality of work. On the other hand, social cohesion is concerned with the relationships of organisational members. That is there must be good relationships among members (Hargreaves 1999). In a school where the two domains are kept at optimal levels, academic performance is high (Fink 2000; Dimmock and Walker 2005; Ogbonna 1993; Stoll and Fink 1996). Thus, if the behaviour of organisational members is task oriented, committed to results, and if their relations are good they work jointly and collaboratively, as a result, organisational performance becomes good.

We now turn to specific types of school cultures available in the literature. These include the formal or traditional school culture; the welfarist school culture; the hothouse school culture; the survivalist school culture; and the ideal school culture. Each of these is described in terms of the two domains, namely, social cohesion and social control (Stoll 1999; Hargreaves 1997; Fink 2000; Hargreaves 1999). We discuss these school cultures below.

The Hothouse School Culture

In this type of school culture both domains (social cohesion and social control) are extremely high (Stoll 1999; Hargreaves 1997; Fink 2000). The degree of educational activities is extremely high. While this culture may lead to good academic

performance, members work in fear and under too much pressure. There are very high expectations from both teachers and learners, but because of the pressure, there is no support from and for each other.

The Survivalist School Culture

In the survivalist school culture, the undertaking of educational activities is extremely low. Both social cohesion and control are low (Fink 2000; Hargreaves 1997). Neither collaboration nor collegiality exists in a school with this type of culture. A school with this type of culture is said to exist in "at-risk" or breaking-down mode. In such a situation teachers do not feel free to ask for assistance regarding their work from their fellow teachers, because there is low social cohesion. Collegiality and collaboration are hindered. As a result, expertise among teachers is ignored. The social control domain is also low because teachers are not able to discipline learners. In such a school culture academic performance is most likely to be low.

The Traditional or Formal School Culture

In the traditional or formal school culture, the social control domain is high while the social cohesion domain is low (Fink 2000; Stoll 1999; Hargreaves 1997). The focus in this culture is on the discipline of members but the relationships among school members are ignored. This means that in this type of culture there is no culture of collaboration and collegiality. Teachers put pressure on learners and themselves, yet there are no good relationships between learners and teachers and among teachers. Therefore, academic achievement is likely to be either poor or moderate due to the imbalance in the domains.

The Welfarist School Culture

In the welfarist school culture social control is low and social cohesion is high. The relationships between teachers and students are very friendly, but there is no struggle and striving towards school work. As a result, academic achievement is poor, and students end up blaming their teachers for not pushing them harder to do their work. In much the same way as in the formal school culture, there is no culture of collaboration and collegiality towards school work among school members.

The Ideal or Effective School Culture

In the ideal or effective school culture both domains are at optimum level. Expectations and support for achieving good standards of education are high. Members of the school organisation are supportive of one another in order to reach the optimum levels of the two domains (Fink 2000; Stoll 1999; Hargreaves 1997). In this type of school, the principal plays a key role in motivating and supporting the staff and students (Tableman 2004; Ajaheb-Jahangeer and Jahangeer 2004). Due to this support both teachers and students work comfortably because they feel free to raise their problems and to voice their views concerning their work. As a result, collaboration and collegiality occur spontaneously because members are not unduly pressurised to do their work (Fink 2000).

Features of a Sound School Culture

While culture is situationally unique (Hargreaves 1997; Prosser 1999; Bush and Anderson 2003; Moloi 2005), literature suggests that there are some common features that can be associated with good academic performance. Such features make up what is regarded as "sound school cultures" (Smith and Roodt 2003). From the school cultures we described earlier, a sound school culture would be one that maintains social control and social cohesion at optimal levels. A sound school culture leads to an improved and effective school, and one prominent feature of an effective school is good academic results. A sound school culture is composed of different cultural norms which go hand-in-hand to build up a whole-school culture. For example, where there is a sound school culture, there are cultural norms that characterise such a culture. In line with this thinking, Stoll and Fink (1996) and Fink (2000) suggest that the following cultural norms underpin successful school improvement. Improved academic results in a school form part of such improvement.

- *Shared goals or meaning* – "we know where we are going". This is where members of a school make well-informed decisions when setting school goals, and are engaged in a joint focus towards what is to be achieved. In her study, Ngcobo (2005) concludes that common goals characterise a good school culture which provides or results in "unity of being". Fink's (2000) findings reveal that "shared meaning" enabled Lord Byron School to prosper. Through shared meaning, the mission statement and a set of goals were developed in the school. Thus culture is seen as a "unifying force" within the organisation (Ajaheb-Jahangeer and Jahangeer 2004). Through shared goals and meaning, members of the school strive for achievement. In line with this, Liebenberg and Barners (2004, p. 10) assert that, "the members of a group want to hold on to their cultural assumptions, because culture provides meaning and makes life predictable".

- *Responsibility for success* – "We must succeed". At Lord Byron School, Fink (2000) found that the major principle of good academic performance was the responsibility of each staff member. Torrington and Weightman's (1993) findings also indicate that at Valley High School staff commitment and cohesion were the striking features of the culture of that school. The staff felt that it was its responsibility to bring about success in the school. Where the prevailing culture within the school does not allow teachers to feel that they are responsible for the school's success, commitment is not likely to feature as part of their culture. Thus a wider involvement of teachers in educational activities provides an opportunity for responsibility, and this results in commitment (Mortimore et al., in Hargreaves and Hopkins 1993).
- *Collegiality* – "We're working on this together". Stoll and Fink's (1996) and Fink's (2000) findings indicate that collegiality leads to interdependence, and develops "togetherness" among staff members. Torrington and Weightman's (1993) findings reveal that co-operation, trust, cohesion and a sense of wholeness were the core values of the school culture at Summerfield. These helped members to work together in a collegial way and further, that this happened spontaneously. Ngcobo (2008) indicates that at Umzamo High School in South Africa, communality was characterised by a sense of belonging and trust among the school members. Because of this, "communality" members strived to do their best to preserve the good name of the school. Thus, if members regard collegiality as central to their success, it means they have a feeling that they are all responsible for the school's success.
- *Continuous improvement* – "We can get better". According to Stoll and Fink (1996) more can be achieved in a school, regardless of how effective it is deemed to be. Improvement should be considered as an ongoing, endless process. Fink (2000) also indicates that teachers at Lord Byron School valued continuous improvement which increased their commitment to work. Similarly, Wolk (2008) argues that by helping students find pleasure in learning, we can make that learning infinitely more successful.
- *Risk-taking* – "We learn by trying something new". In Lord Byron School, it was found that teachers valued "risk-taking" whereby they learnt from mistakes and carried out experiments in the teaching–learning process. According to Stoll and Fink (1996), experimentation, trial-and-error and learning through failure are essential parts of growth which schools must adopt and value.
- *Support* – "There is always someone there to help". According to Stoll and Fink (1996), the school principal must always be there to provide support whenever it is needed. He or she must be a good listener so that effective communication prevails in the organisation. Support within an organisation strengthens collegiality and collaboration. Stoll and Fink (1996) maintain that collegiality refers to work-related interdependence, which is concerned with personal availability, kindness and caring, where teachers and administrators make time for each other in order to provide support. This also tells us that a principal must have confidence and competence in his or her work so that the subordinate teachers can have trust and hope in his or her support.

- *Mutual respect* – "Everyone has something to offer". Stoll and Fink (1996) indicate that a good principal makes his or her subordinate teachers aware of their importance at work. The principal and the staff consider the differences between people as a mutually enriching source of strength. This implies that people learn from other people's experiences to improve or broaden their knowledge. Therefore, they must respect other people's opinions to allow growth of their knowledge. Piperato and Roy (2002) suggest that shared leadership, relationships based on mutual respect and caring, collegiality and a focus on performance are additional core values in a collaborative culture. They further point out that a "teacher–student relationship must be characterised by mutual respect, collaboration and concern" (p. 1). This tells us that if mutual respect is maintained in a school, "support" may also be maximised. If organisational members realise and become aware of their importance at work, they work hard, thus making themselves responsible members.
- *Celebration and humour* – "We feel good about ourselves". In Lord Byron School, school members (teachers and students) celebrated their good performance through various school activities. Rituals and ceremonies such as combined student–teacher and teacher involvement with intramural basketball were some of the features (Fink 2000). According to Stoll and Fink (1996), "humour" seems to be a vital part of school culture for it reduces tension, maintains a sense of belonging, highlights shared meanings, enables difficult issues to be openly discussed and makes work and collaboration fun. As a result, members feel appreciated and motivated, and strive to work to their best ability. On celebration, Ajaheb-Jahangeer and Jahangeer (2004, p. 252) argue that the "idea of reward is a great source of motivation since it helps the students to understand how hard work is valued".

Research Methodology

Within the qualitative research approach, we adopted the case study research design with each school as a case. Yin (in Nieuwenhuis, 2007, p. 75) describes a case study as:

> …an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple source of evidence are used.

Cohen et al. (2007, p. 253) say "case studies can penetrate a situation in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis". Nieuwenhuis (2007) adds that a case study is used to answer "how" and "why" questions, and it is often focused on a system of action and the case is a "bounded system". In our case, we sought to determine how and why the two schools in question sustained high academic performance while most schools of their kind seemed to be declined in that regard.

We selected the two schools, one in a semi-urban and the other in an urban area on the basis of their academic performance and also because of their easy

accessibility to us. Our participants were selected teachers in the two schools. To be included in our sample, a teacher had to have taught in the school for a period of at least two years. We decided to focus on teachers because of their crucial role in the academic performance of pupils.

We obtained permission for the Lesotho Ministry of Education and informed consent from all the participants. We initially targeted a minimum sample of 30% of the staff in each school, that is, about ten at Maliba and six at Ntatai. However, two teachers at Maliba who we originally sampled were eventually unable to participate, leaving us with eight at this school. An additional four teachers at Ntatai expressed their desire to be included therefore we ended up with ten participants therein. Thus our sample comprised a total of 18 teachers.

Our main data collection method was the interview, with observation and document analysis working as supplementary methods. We sought to have what we observed and read in documents inform some of the questions we would ask in interviews. We understood the observation method of data collection as "the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them" (Nieuwenhuis 2007, p. 83). Cohen et al. (2007, p. 258) stress that "at the heart of every case study lies a method of observation". Nisbert and Watt (in Bell 1993) assert that interviews reveal only how people perceive what happens, not what actually happens. Therefore, direct observation was to us a useful tool to understanding phenomena. We observed the entire life of the school: teachers' behavioural patterns, school assemblies, lunch times, staff meetings, school's starting and ending times, and more, with a view to gauging what was valued and believed in.

In each school, the main observation period was two weeks. In addition to this, observation went on during the document analysis and interview phases of the research project. Each day was 6 h (from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm) long. We observed and recorded events as they unfolded. The recording involved making brief notes about the event, the date and time it occurred, the "players", etc.

Document analysis involved studying school policies, vision and mission statements, school mottos, notices, attendance registers and clock books. The document analysis process took one week in each school.

With regard to interviews, we adopted the semi-structured method which allowed "for probing and clarification of answers" (Nieuwenhuis 2007a, p. 87). We interviewed the participants individually. In order to obtain the maximum possible interview data, we used three probing strategies, namely, detail-oriented probes (where the interviewer probes the interviewee in order for them to provide detailed information of what they are talking about), elaboration probes (where the interviewee is probed to elaborate on what s/he is talking about) and clarification probes (where the interviewee is probed to clarify his or her point) (Nieuwenhuis 2007a).

We interviewed each participant once with each interview lasting for an average period of 40 min. All interviews were held at the schools. All interviews were tape-recorded. The focus areas in these interviews were: (1) how the processes of teaching and learning were handled; (2) how school development and improvement were managed; and (3) how the relationships within the school were.

In qualitative research, the process of analysing data is often intertwined with that of data production (Nieuwenhuis 2007b). In line with this, our data analysis commenced during the data production period. This entailed re-arranging data according to emerging common meanings, phrases, themes or patterns. After these initial data analysis processes, the data were summarised and organised in accordance with what the study sought to achieve.

Findings

The Context of the Two Schools

Maliba School is located in a semi-urban area close to a town and an industrial area. The school draws most of its roll from five neighbouring villages. Many of the villagers are factory workers while others are small-scale crop and livestock farmers. The factory workers work for very low wages. Due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, many women and children are widowed and orphaned respectively. Prior to FPE, many of these families could not afford to pay school fees for their children resulting in many drop-outs and child labourers in the area.

The school had 34 teachers (all qualified), the majority being females. The principal and the deputy principal did not have classes. They were full-time school managers. There were 19 classrooms, one office for the principal, a small school library and a kitchen but no staffroom. The school enrolment was 1,587 making a teacher–pupil ratio of about 1:50. It had three streams in each of Grades 1–3, five Grade 4 streams and two streams for each of Grades 5–7. This school has produced good academic results almost every year since the early 1990s.

Ntatai School is located within an industrial area. Because of this, the area has attracted people from all the ten districts of the country with many people working in factories while others are in small businesses. Therefore, the children at Ntatai came from diverse backgrounds.

There were 21 teachers in the school with one additional teacher to join soon. Only the principal was non-teaching. The majority of the teachers at Ntatai School were qualified. Some were furthering their studies on a part-time basis. Ntatai School has produced good academic results since 2004.

The school enrolment was 1,043, making a teacher–pupil ratio of about 1:52. The school had a severe shortage of classrooms. It had double streams from Grade 1 to 7, but there were only eight classrooms, so classes had to share these.

The Respondents

Eighteen participants (eight from Maliba Primary School and ten from Ntatai Primary School) were interviewed. Tables 64.1 and 64.2 summarise the biographical information of the participants.

Table 64.1 Biographical data of respondents: Maliba School

Experience (years)	Males	Females	Total
2	0	0	0
3–4	2	0	2
5–6	0	3	3
7 and above	0	3	3
Total	2	6	8

Table 64.2 Biographical data of respondents: Ntatai School

Experience (years)	Males	Females	Total
2	0	0	0
3–4	2	1	3
5–6	1	2	3
7 and above	1	3	4
Total	4	6	10

Main Findings

Time Management

At Maliba Primary School, teachers and learners were always punctual. Everybody was required to be precise about the times clocking in and out. This seemed to be in keeping, at least partly, with the school motto that read: "Punctuality; Discipline; Cleanliness". The information from the clock book indicated that teachers were almost always present at school every working day.

A large percentage of the learners arrived at school about one hour before the actual starting time and went on with their school work in their classrooms on their own. Everything seemed to be done on time. Due to the huge enrolment, the school was divided into three for purposes of assembly namely Grades 1 and 2 as one group, Grades 3, 4 and 5 as the second and Grades 6 and 7 forming the third group. This arrangement seemed to work very well in terms of time and management.

Both schools had the policy that teachers should not visit one another's classrooms during class time. This we learnt was to maximise teaching and minimise opportunities for teachers idling between lessons. Both learners' exercise books and our own observation showed that teachers at Maliba strictly observed lesson timetables to the extent that at the end of the day, every subject on the timetable would have been taught accordingly.

At Ntatai we observed the same type of time consciousness we reported about Maliga School. The shortage of classrooms created a great challenge during examination times. However, we observed that learners were well organised in small groups and they successfully took turns to write. Immediately after all learners finished writing, teachers would start marking. We were informed that timely feedback to learners was one of the school's trademarks.

We concluded that the two schools were good users of time.

Relationships

In both schools we found evidence of good relationships among teachers and between teachers and learners. A teacher at Maliba Primary School had this to say:

> They (relationships) are very good truly. You feel at home when you are with your colleagues. This is where we spend most of our time and we know each other's problems and we discuss our problems. Every Thursday in the Morning Prayer we talk about our problems even our personal and family problems. We also share our happiness (anything good in your family) and celebrate it in that prayer. For example, this morning one of our colleagues told us that her daughter had a baby boy last night, and we shared that happiness with her.

Another teacher at the same school said:

> We have good relationships. Our pupils are free to go to any teacher and ask for help. We try by all means to be open to them. We even have our own nick-names as teachers, and our learners are free to use those names. We are friendly to them but in a respectful way. We emphasise equality of teachers to our learners in terms of respect and knowledge. So our learners can go to any teacher and get assistance. Our relationships are good to the extent that we feel free to disclose even our personal problems or family problems to our colleagues. This helps us a lot because we reduce stress and get rid of frustration and we are able to interact with the school environment.

Similarly, one teacher at Ntatai had this to say:

> We have very good relationships in this school. We look forward to coming to work because the environment is conducive to teaching and learning. We feel 'home away from home' here. This makes us love our work….Our learners are very comfortable discussing their problems with us teachers. We have built a good friendship with them.

Teachers emphasised though that they were fair, friendly but very firm with learners. A teacher at Maliba:

> We have good relationships with our learners, but there is a limit to relationships in that learners should not be too relaxed towards us, at the same time they should not be shy to approach us when they have problems. They should know the boundaries between themselves and us. All learners are free to go to any teacher with their problems and be assisted.

We observed two staff meetings in each of the schools. In both cases we found friendly communication throughout the meetings. After the meetings the staff ate lunch together. We felt that this created positive climates in these schools. Sharing lunch together is an indication of positive climate within a school (Hargreaves and Hopkins 1993). Fink (2000) asserts that a culture with optimal social cohesion is revealed in good relationships among organisational members.

Teaching and Learning Processes

We found similar teaching and learning practices in the two schools. The teachers indicated that they practised subject specialisation in higher grades, that is, each teacher taught a few subjects according to their areas of greatest competence.

> We do subject teaching in classes 5, 6 and 7. In higher classes we find it very important, because if a teacher knows Maths, we give him or her the chance to teach that subject if s/he is efficient. We do subject teaching so that you teach the subject that you are comfortable with. It is because sometimes, if you teach all the subjects, certain other subjects will suffer because you will keep on dodging those subjects. So, if you are comfortable with your subject, there could be perfection in your teaching (Teacher at Maliba)

We found this to be unique because in Lesotho primary school teachers are not trained to specialise in specific subjects but to teach all subjects of the curriculum. In the majority of schools, a teacher teaches all subjects (Mulkeen and Chen 2008). In contrast, the two schools we studied had formed subject specialisation as part of their culture. We further found that teachers who taught the same subjects schemed and planned together so that they could help each other with teaching techniques. Thus team work among teachers was valued in these schools.

We also found that team spirit was also inculcated in the learners in the two schools. Learners were usually organised to learn in groups. Despite the groups being quite large because the classes were large, the teachers managed to make them work.

> We use the grouping method in all classes. We vary the composition of the groups sometimes we adopt ability grouping and other times mixed ability. In all cases we emphasise mutual respect and help our learners to understand that everyone has something to offer. Since we adopted this method, our school results are very good. (Ntatai Primary School teacher).

In connection with this practice, a teacher at Maliba Primary School had this to say:

> We encourage our learners to form groups for learning. Whatever they have learnt they must practise in their small groups or discuss it, so that they can be successful in their learning. At home and at school they must learn to work in groups – talking about what they have learnt. This practice leads to success. Whatever new topic they learn, we encourage them to talk about it in their small groups.

Another practice we found in the two schools was the teachers' ability to work independently of the prescribed teaching guides. Teachers in both schools reported that due to shortage of teaching–learning resources, they did not have teachers' guides for some subjects. This shortage actually created fertile ground for teachers to craft their own guidelines in the way they understood their teaching–learning situations. This, the teachers reported, also strengthened team work amongst them:

> The lack of teachers' guides for some subjects compels us to try our own devices. We improvise and try our own approaches. Sometimes you may find that the suggested activities in a teacher's guide are not suitable for your plans, or do not work properly to serve your intentions, so you have to try your own ways (Teacher at Maliba).

A teacher at Ntatai Primary School explained how they respond to the problem of lack of teachers' guides:

> We do not consider the absence of a teacher's guide as an obstacle. Whether the teacher's guide is there or not, we find our own way of tackling the topic. We always help each other in handling a topic. Where we face a problem that is beyond our ability to solve, we do not have a problem consulting my neighbouring primary schools or secondary schools, and we know we will be assisted.

In our experience at other schools in the country, teachers tend to be slaves of the teachers' guides. Where there is no teacher's guide for a particular subject, they tend to render little or no attention to that subject and argue that it is not their fault. As a result, pupil performance in that subject is negatively affected.

A participative, competitive spirit

Another practice we found in the two schools is a spirit of healthy competition. A teacher at Ntatai spoke about how he viewed their school against their neighbours:

> We have a spirit of winning. For some time now we have performed better than our neighbouring schools and we are proud of this. We feel that our success is our responsibility.

Within the school, we learnt that teachers competed to excel in their subject specialisations. The competition was healthy in that those who taught the same subjects worked together for the betterment of those subjects.

We also found that in both schools every teacher participated in one form of extramural activity or another. This seemed to create a community of participation. A teacher at Ntatai said:

> We have different activities. In all activities each teacher has his or her own part to play. We make sure that everybody participates. For a particular activity there will be some teachers who are responsible for it, but, during that activity all teachers take part and see to it that learners are participating.

At Maliba, a teacher said:

> At the beginning of each year we hold a staff meeting and list all the duties that we are supposed to do and be in charge of, for example culture, sports, dance club, science club, English club, environment, and others. Each teacher is allocated his or her duty, but they are given the opportunity to choose an activity which suits their own interest. Because they feel comfortable with the responsibility of their own choice, they put effort into it and strive for good quality work. There is high competition in this school. Every teacher wants his or her club to be at the top. Even if a teacher initially lacks interest and is not willing to commit him/herself to an activity, the way others commit themselves will make that teacher to get motivated.

Fostering a Sense of Responsibility

Another common practice we found at the two schools was that the same teacher takes learners from Grade 1 to 3. Thereafter, subject specialisation occurs but a teacher takes certain subjects with given classes from Grade 4 to 7. Through this practice, teachers are accountable for learners' academic performance for a number of years. A teacher at Maliba explained:

> We practise this style in order to avoid putting the blame on each other. We also avoid the problem of learning about new learners every year because this prevents us from noticing,

and correcting the loop-holes quickly. *Re leka ho boloka matla a chain ea rona ea ho ruta.* (We try to preserve a strong connection of the chain in our teaching).…each teacher works hard because the blame will be upon him or her if the performance becomes bad. We have noticed that this encourages commitment and devotion among teachers because they do not want to be blamed for learners failing.

At Maliba, they practised what they referred to as "pre-classes". These refer to self-directed learning which learners engage in before classes start. This entails learners coming early to school and getting down to doing work in their classrooms. The teachers reported that for this practice to work, they had to work hard to help learner appreciate and cope with self-directed learning. We observed that the practice was working, but one major constraint was the shortage of learning resources such as textbooks. All the same, this practice seemed to foster a sense of responsibility in learners particularly those in higher grades.

Although Ntatai School did not practise pre-classes, they also had their way of fostering responsibility for learning in the pupils. At teacher at the school had this to say:

> We try to make them understand that they learn for their own benefit. We give them time to study on their own so that they develop the habit of pushing themselves in their learning. There are some learners who are responsible for study time in each class (class monitors). They make sure that there is order in the class during study time or during the absence of the class teacher.

Another teacher added:

> We do not tell our learners about the importance of learning and sit back. We tell them and help them to work hard. We do that by showing devotion to our work.

School-Based Professional Development

In addition to the staff development they could get from elsewhere, the two schools we studied believed in self-growth. They had faith in what as colleagues they could do to develop one another. Teachers told us that those among them who were good in certain subjects were made to feel that it was their responsibility to assist their colleagues where necessary for the benefit of the whole school. They therefore held school-based workshops to learn from one another.

> We know our subject experts whom we regard as our resource persons in this school. If I have problem with a certain topic, I know who to consult, and every resource person is willing to help any teacher at any time. The school-based workshops we hold are quite useful (Teacher at Maliba).

In both schools teachers reported the importance of doing away with shyness when they lacked knowledge and understanding in certain areas of their work, hence the importance of sharing knowledge. They said to say "I don't know how to do this. How can you help me?" was encouraged.

What Cultures Do These Schools Practise and How Do They Sustain Them?

The two schools managed their time very well. In both schools, teachers were good exemplars for learners. They arrived at work on time and worked according to the time tables throughout the day. Through teachers' guidance, learners developed self-discipline towards their own learning by engaging in pre-classes, which we found to have become part of the school culture at Maliba Primary School. Effective schools help learners to manage their own learning (Mortimore et al. in Hargreaves and Hopkins 1993). We can conclude that both schools valued hard work and made it part of their cultures.

The "we" identity seemed to be very strong in both schools. Despite that we interviewed teachers as individuals they still referred to what they do and how they do it as a collective. We therefore concluded that the "we" factor stood out as an important aspect of these schools' cultures. In his research, Fink (2000) maintains that responsibility for success means "we must succeed". Through the "we" spirit, collegiality, mutual respect and a conviction that everyone had something to offer were fostered.

Sound relationships in each of the schools made people (teachers and learners) to enjoy their work and the school environment. An appropriate limit to the relationships between teachers and learners helped to avoid unacceptable behaviour among learners. Openness and respect for differences were valued within these schools.

Subject specialisation, a practice that is generally unheard of in many Lesotho primary schools seemed to partly explain the academic successes of these two schools. This practice fostered a sense of responsibility and commitment on the part of teachers. The practice was also strengthened by teachers' commitment to team work. The two schools also practised another form of specialisation namely what we have called Class specialisation, that is, a teacher teaching the same class for three consecutive grades. Being accountable for learners' academic performance such a long period of time was another way of fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment among teachers given the Lesotho examination-oriented education system. Against this background, we found that a competitive spirit also prevailed in the two schools.

A sense of independence as opposed to dependence was evident in the two schools. Instead of mourning about lack of basic teaching–learning materials such as teaching guides, the schools went ahead and devised their own which some teachers argued were even more relevant to their unique needs as an individual school. The sense of independence was enabled by teachers' conviction that they could learn from one another.

The two schools can be said to have maintained an optimum balance between the two domains of social cohesion and social control. There were high expectations for both learners and teachers. At the same time, teachers supported one another and the learners.

At Maliba especially, every teacher participated in extracurricular activities. This seemed to create a sense of identity in which everyone belonged. This also seemed to help learners to see the unity of purpose among the staff.

What Are Some of the Implications for Leadership for Learning?

O'Donghue and Clarke (2010, p. 153) refer to the "mutually supporting nature of leadership and learning". They quote West-Burnham and O'Sullivan (1998) who describe the relationship between leadership and learning as symbiotic in that "one is not possible without the other and the success of one is determined by the extent to which the other is available" (O'Donghue and Clarke 2010, p. 153).

Our study showed that the two schools emphasised learning. A focus on learning is one of the five principles of leadership for learning advanced by the Cambridge Network (O'Donghue and Clarke 2010). This principle is premised on the conviction that everyone is and should be a learner. In our study we found that in addition to learning from their teachers, learners were socialised to learn on their own. Teachers believed that they could learn from one another. Therefore leaders for learning must encourage and facilitate learning agendas that allow everyone in the school to learn, including themselves. Knapp et al. (2003) rightly classify such learning into three categories: student learning, teacher learning and organisational learning.

As rightly argued by O'Donghue and Clarke (2010), it is necessary for a school to create conditions favourable to learning. This is similar to what Southworth (2002), quoted in O'Donghue and Clarke (2010), refers to as creating a learning school. One way through which a learning school culture is created is through building working relationships in the school. Our study showed that teacher–teacher and teacher–learner relationships were cordial. As a result there prevailed mutual respect and trust among organisational members. It seems, therefore, that leaders who invest in trust and relationship building among those they lead would be creating opportunities for learning to occur. O'Donghue and Clarke (2010) report that creating favourable to learning is associated with one of the Cambridge Network leadership for learning principles.

From our study, we can argue that school culture can be gauged by the extent to which a sense of responsibility prevails there in. Our findings show that teachers in the two schools sought to succeed. They sought to be better than their neighbouring schools. The "we want to succeed" drive prevailed in them. This would lead to people's desire for continuous improvement (Stoll and Fink 1996). Such high sense of responsibility is only possible within a distributed leadership school culture in which decision making is shared. There is therefore value in leaders for learning relinquish power and allow those they lead space to decide on organisational matters.

> The process of taking responsibility for one's learning and to act on behalf of, and with, others in proactive forms of initiative-taking provide the main linkages between leadership and learning (MacBeath 2006, in O'Donghue and Clarke (2010, p. 158).

Thus sharing leadership should be one of the tools for leaders for learning. As Harris and Lambert (2003) rightly argue, the essence of shared leadership is collective and collaborative construction of knowledge.

The resilience of a school is best tested during times of crisis. Teachers at Maliba and Ntatai Schools faced a crisis of shortage of teaching–learning materials including teaching guides. In response, they transformed this crisis to an opportunity for them to try their own ways of teaching. They moved from a state of dependence to one of independence. The two schools' ability to make this important shift is analogous to what O'Donghue and Clarke (2010) refer to as making thinking visible. Leadership for learning entails creating an environment for thinking issues through. A culture of visible thinking in a school is necessary if teachers and learners are to take ownership of the challenges that face them.

Stoll and Fink's notion of risk-taking, "We learn by trying something new" was also evident at Maliba and Ntatai Schools. Unlike most primary schools in Lesotho, Maliba and Ntatai decided to try subject specialisation. The two immediate risks these schools ran were that the practice could have totally failed and negatively affected their pass rates, and that the education authorities could have stopped them from such a practice thereby dampening the spirit within the schools. However, none of this happened. Instead, the risk became a big opportunity for learning on the part of teachers. It therefore seems that leaders of learning should encourage risk-taking. But risk, by definition means that there is a possibility of a bad result, the possibility that something unpleasant or even dangerous may happen. Where leaders are inclusive in decision making in the organisation, the possibility of a bad result being collectively received is higher than where decisions were the monopoly of a few. Leaders for learning need not only create an environment for risk-taking but also collectively develop capacity in the organisation for accepting and learning from bad results there from.

Conclusion

In their own ways, the two schools, Maliba and Ntatai, were succeeding in what MacBeath (2005, p. 11) refers to as "winning hearts and minds". This is what leadership for learning entails. Winning hearts and minds involves developing support "premised on staff learning and schools learning through collaborative activity, through internal networking, informal conversations and a constant simmering of new ideas never far from people's thinking" (MacBeath, 2005 in O'Donghue and Clarke 2010, p. 161).

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Chapter 65
Re-Imagining Disadvantaged Community and Family Leadership for Learning: An (Im)modest Proposal

Greer Johnson and Paula Jervis-Tracey

Introduction

The implementation of the Australian *Family-Schools Partnerships Framework* DEST (2010)[1] presents unprecedented opportunities for Australia's communities and families to impact on schools' decisions regarding children's learning. More affluent communities and families have long benefited from close contacts with schools while those in low socio-economic circumstances have been relatively disadvantaged. Schools have long realised that alone they cannot improve students' learning. To this point there has been little sustained success in engaging under-represented parents and communities in learning, and less still in formulating ways that those communities can lead learning. For the most part schools have invited communities and parents into schools but typically the invitation is related to activities unrelated to learning. The challenge now facing governments and educational institutions in developed countries is how all parents and communities might gain access to school-related policies and exercise agency in relation to children's learning. The time is ripe for re-imagining what it might be like for disadvantaged parents to have a substantial input into their children's learning. There is a long way to travel before this is commonplace. We argue that change to current "invisibility" of disadvantaged parents and communities in their children's learning at home and at school is premised on their acquisition of relevant social and cultural capital necessary for authentic participation on their terms.

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This chapter addresses the issue of community and parental engagement in learning for the most underrepresented group. Further, and more importantly, it targets change by exploring links between engagement and agency and to aims to raise questions about the terms of engagement. It is organised in four sections. First, it discusses the known impediments to communities' and parents' engagement with school and with learning in particular. The second section outlines the known essentials for a trajectory of community and parental engagement in leading learning. Section three describes Australian examples that illustrate some of the essentials of participation and engagement. The chapter concludes with a proposal for actualising disadvantaged community leadership for learning and a discussion of the implications for future intervention research in the field of parental engagement.

Impediments to Community and Family Engagement in Schooling

Community has been used as an umbrella term to describe a number of social groups. In the main it has been used in two ways in education. It has been used not only to refer to parents and carers but also to encompass the wider community, businesses and employers who form a larger body distinguishable from those working within schools, including school leaders, teachers and support staff. This description can imply an insider–outsider mindset about who is included in schooling and learning and who is not. Such a view is, however, counterproductive to the formation of strong family–school partnerships. More recently, schools have become more inviting of participation by the communities they serve. Many school websites and newsletters refer to their school community, which includes families, students and school staff and often members of the wider community. There still remain impediments to those who are most alienated becoming fully fledged members of the school community. We now outline two key impediments to disadvantaged communities' and parents' engagement with schooling and learning, as evidenced in recent international literature.

Schools as Separate from Community: Physically and Socially

Parental *engagement* in children's learning at home and school is crucial for securing productive outcomes (Jeynes 2005). As Lareau (1987) argues, for parents to be involved with schools and with children's learning they must have access to institutional resources and enjoy opportunities to form relationships with teachers. Internationally, disadvantaged parents are least likely to be involved in schooling activities (OECD 2008). Berthelsen and Walker (2008), for example, report from *Growing up in Australia*: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC),

being conducted in Australian primary schools, that low-SES families still remain "invisible" in schools. We suggest reasons for this. In most cases in Australia, schools are stand-alone educational institutions, physically separated from the communities they serve. Disadvantaged parents do not always have the economic resources to travel to schools nor the flexibility of conditions of work to find the time to attend (MacBeath et al. 2007).

MacBeath et al. (2007), researching families' relationships to schools in the UK, found that scant attendance of low-SES parents at school meetings is due to "domestic and financial pressures, travel, prior negative experiences of schools and lack of confidence in dealing with professionals" and that therefore, schools are left to "create a culture of expectation, aspiration and optimism" (p. 69). The advocating of full-service schools represents a move to bring community and schools together in an acknowledgement that engagement in schooling is linked to other human needs such as health care. Many disadvantaged parents also lack a network of informal institutionalised relationships which prove to be vital in enabling them to benefit from opportunities schools may offer, especially those related to curriculum and learning. Although there have been several attempts to address these impediments to partnership-building between families and schools, there is no current solution and many disadvantaged families remain excluded from dominant "cultures of power" in schools (Delpitt 1988). So far it has proven too problematic and too contentious to implement approaches to disadvantage and partnerships such that communities, parents, school leaders and teachers can learn together to shift negative assumptions and low expectations about participation in schooling and engagement in learning (Robertson 2008; Deal and Peterson 1999).

Top-Down Views of School Leadership

Educational institutions, by nature, tend to formalise and individualise leadership, which in turn creates a hierarchical environment. Johnson et al. (2005) argued the need for schools to become more inclusive, to encourage parents and families to participate beyond the peripheral settings of the school tuck shop and the clothing shop, a view shared in Warren et al. (2009). Increasingly, schools are required to be accountable for developing programmes that address the needs of the situated context while still satisfying the accountability structures of their central office. Whilst the social and economic circumstances of school communities may differ, the rules by which schools must proceed are bound by common policy frameworks. Schools now find themselves in systems, negotiating new terrain in a market mindset. Recent work in the UK suggests that "schools need to be placed in the context of the local markets within which they operate" (Waterhouse 2008). Local schools operate within a hierarchy that is being intensified by market policies, tending to exaggerate the difference between schools (MacBeath et al. 2007, p. 6). In some educational systems within Australia this new terrain has seen the extension of decision-making authority and processes to school councils that have in their

membership parent and community stakeholders. While others have developed structures through which parents can provide direct advice to schools on a range of matters (MacBeath and Dempster 2009, p. 56), the breadth of influence has also extended in a few instances to a focus on leadership for learning (Swaffield and MacBeath 2008). For example, in their study of 24 schools and eight higher education institutions across seven countries MacBeath et al. (2006a, b) sought to inquire into the development of leadership and learning practices within schools. Further, Swaffield and MacBeath (2008) suggested that leadership for learning is a distinct form of educational practice that "involves an explicit dialogue, maintaining a focus on learning, attending to the conditions that favour learning, and leadership that is both shared and accountable" (p. 42). This broader view of leadership takes into account the notion that for school improvement to have a wider impact there must be inclusion of people with a broader community perspective than is available within the school itself.

Known Essentials

Within the literature, there are a number of recurring themes that emerge with regard to the "essentials" for families to become engaged in children's learning. These are (1) social capital; (2) home–school partnerships; (3) community support; and (4) opportunities for contribution that support and encourage community leadership for learning. It should be stressed though that each "essential" does not stand alone; rather the essentials are interrelated, with each coming to the fore depending on the contextual and cultural factors of the site in question. Each essential is now explained in turn.

Social Capital

Social reproduction theory (Bourdieu 1977) has supported a range of research associated with education and disadvantage (e.g., Delpitt 1988). Essentially this theory explains how different forms of capital (e.g. social and cultural) afford benefits for those endowed with these. For Field (2003), the central tenet of social capital is that "relationships matter". Social capital then is the social fabric as woven by interaction and relationships and through which people build communities and commit to each other. According to Putnam (2000, p. 19):

> Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital.

In tangible terms social capital means that the concrete experience of social networks can, arguably, yield positive outcomes. As will be seen in the work of Homel and MacBeath below, access to social capital is essential in building opportunities for families to connect, not only with each other, but also with schools and school communities. As Putnam suggests (2000, pp. 288–290) "community connectedness is not just about warm fuzzy tales of civic triumph. In measurable and well documented ways, social capital makes an enormous difference to our lives". In relation to education, social reproduction theory has enabled researchers to shift blame for lack of success from those seen as non-achievers to their lack of access to opportunities and capital necessary for achievement. The lack of access to social and cultural capital endemic in disadvantaged families and communities has been identified as a key factor that has impeded their building of strong partnerships with schools. Not surprisingly, disadvantaged families and communities lack social capital to the degree that more affluent members of the community have acquired it. Lack of education and social and economic status are often barriers to social networking, especially necessary for partnership-building between families and schools, for example as a prerequisite for membership of school councils. Community and parental engagement in schooling is complex and needs to acknowledge its socioeconomic, gendered, classed and racialised nature (Crozier 2000), so that attempts to improve engagement of disadvantaged parents do not continue to be framed in a deficit model (Hanafin and Lynch 2002), one that perpetuates a cycle of blame (Mills and Gale 2004).

Family–School Partnerships

Family–school partnerships range from involvement in schooling more generally to more specific engagement in learning. It is widely recognised that for students to succeed they need the full support of their parents or caregivers (Jeynes 2005). Such support extends to close and sustained links between learning at home and at school. It has long been a goal for many governments and schools in western countries to promote parental engagement in schooling as a way of improving the quality of learning outcomes and schooling experience more broadly. Parental involvement can refer to a broad range of activities, from discussion at home about school activities, visits to schools to gather important information and establish good relationships, and discussions with class teachers to keep informed about the child's progress, to assisting more broadly in the governance and practical activities of the school. These activities fall into two broad categories – "at-home" parental involvement and "in-school" parental involvement (Desforges and Abouchaar 2003). In this sense parental involvement in children's learning in and out of school can act as an important two-way conduit of information through which teachers and parents alike can work together to support the child. Teachers and other school staff can learn from parents and gain deeper insights into the circumstances of home life

and home learning while parents can learn from teachers what schools expect of parents and children.

Drawing on research based in the USA, Raffaele and Knoff (1999) claim that work on home–school collaboration should build on a set of core beliefs, namely:

- Collaboration should be pro-active rather than reactive; the engagement of all parents should be worked for.
- Collaboration involves sensitivity to the wide ranging circumstances of all students and families.
- Collaboration recognises and values the contributions parents have to make to the educational process.
- Collaboration must engender parental empowerment; all parents must be given a voice and that voice must be heard. (Raffaele and Knoff 1999, p. 452)

The literature also suggests that "at-home" parental involvement clearly and consistently has significant effects on student achievement, far outweighing other forms of involvement. In particular, Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) concluded that "at-home" parental involvement made "a significant and unique contribution to explaining the variation in children's academic achievement over and above the effects associated with family background" (p. 138). This study also revealed home discussion to be a significant force for student achievement.

The impact of parental involvement and engagement touches a number of areas. Evidence of impact most notably arises from parental values and educational aspirations and positive parenting styles that are consequently internalised by students, shaping their self-perception as learners and affecting their motivation.

Community Support

In recent years, the wider community has become increasingly involved in the provision of educational experiences. For example, schools seek sponsorship by local businesses for programmes seen as valuable. Further, some Australian states have developed successful partnerships between education and industry, offering structured work experiences which meet vocational education and training authority standards while students continue with their formal studies in school. The challenge for community partnerships now is to develop flexible pathways that take account of schools' and communities' contextual factors, for example, the nature of "community" in rural areas and the impact of "critical mass". Teachers and parents in rural schools are essential in developing partnerships between schools and community. Too few people engaged in reciprocal partnerships means that learning outcomes and engagement suffer. Rural schools acting as hubs for the maintenance of community support (Halsey 2004) move some distance towards the notion of "full-service" schools. In many disadvantaged communities schools' attempts to build social capital and a sense of community are frustrated by constant flux, such as population turnover due to lack of permanence and lack of opportunity

to develop strong ties in the "community". This may serve only as a temporary stop on the way to a more permanent future elsewhere. The building of trusting relationships between families and schools is the essence of enhancing social capital through developing new learning cultures that are open to challenge and change.

Opportunities for Contribution

Involving disadvantaged communities in school structures in the life and work of the school has been acknowledged as difficult and complex (Connell 1993). Mills and Gale (2004) argue that inequalities of opportunity for parental involvement in schooling work to maintain disadvantage for marginalised students and lead to a cycle of blame for them and their families. This factor is exacerbated if schools fail to engage families. This points to a need for more research and intervention into the micro-processes of parental engagement in learning. Attempts to improve parental involvement in schooling fall into two main categories. The first category, Hanafin and Lynch (2002) argue, consists of programmes based on "classes" or deficit models. Such programmes typically target parents from disadvantaged groups. They comprise interventions such as early-start programmes, home–school community links and early school-leaving interventions. The other strand is more directed at all parents, regardless of socioeconomic circumstances, and includes parental representative bodies, parent councils and the like. However, it is usually middle-class parents who are most involved in these activities. Crozier (2000) argues that it is important to see parental involvement in schools as a complex, multidimensional issue, and to challenge the commonly held assumption that parental involvement in established school structures is by its very nature a good thing (Crozier 2000; Hanafin and Lynch 2002; Vincent and Martin 2000). This evidence points to the need for schools to reach out to the community rather than simply expecting the reverse.

Despite often well-intentioned efforts by many schools to actively involve parents, many parents perceive themselves as excluded from any genuine participation in educational processes (Hanafin and Lynch 2002). The message from research conducted internationally is that schools cannot do it all (MacBeath et al. 2007) and that there is an urgent need to rethink the intersection of leadership, learning, schools, community and families. Knitzer and Cohen (2007) argue that research too often focuses on the consequences for those families "at risk". They call for more emphasis on "designing, testing and taking to scale interventions that might change the all too predictable negative trajectories" (p. 358). It is clear that interventions need to reverse the responsibilities hierarchy by equipping those parents who lack the necessary capital, to choose a suitable way to lead learning with schools, not necessarily within schools. It is not reasonable to expect disadvantaged parents, many of whom have had little or negative experiences of schooling themselves, to be "trained" to be involved with schools in the conventional manner.

At this turning point, it is timely for principals and school communities to work together to encourage mutual innovation and contribution. As discussed earlier in this chapter, education systems across Australia have moved towards structures that in some way allow for contributions by parents into the broad governance and development of schools. Indeed, recent leadership research highlights the shift from formalised leadership hierarchies to team-oriented and networked arrangements in which expertise is drawn from outside the school along with acknowledgement of the contribution other forms of leadership make (Dempster 2009; Miller and Bentley 2002; Leithwood and Riehl 2003). It is further argued that "leadership roles should stretch across key functions of the school and be extended into the parent body and school community" (Dempster 2009, p. 29). Leadership for learning practice involves the sharing of leadership in which:

- Structures support participation in developing the school as a learning community;
- Shared leadership is symbolised in the day-to-day flow of activities of the school;
- Everyone is encouraged to take the lead as appropriate to task and context;
- The experience and expertise of staff, students and parents are drawn upon as resources;
- Collaborative patterns of work and activity across boundaries of subject, role and status are valued and promoted. (Waterhouse and Møller 2009, p. 124)

Any solution to the limited involvement of low-SES communities and parents in schooling and learning must address the important issue of how teachers and principals approach the community and parents, rather than expecting them to come to schools on demand. Recent research on leadership and professional partnership has demonstrated that professional coaching has the power to invert traditional leadership practice (Robertson 2008, 2009, 2010). It requires a willingness to listen, to change and adapt, and to connect and engage in the learning journey others who have not been seen as partners in the past. For MacBeath and Swaffield (2008) leadership is "characterised not by a few people in formal positions of power controlling and directing many others, but by actions taken by all members of a community in the everyday flow of activity" (p. 1).

Getting parents involved and engaged in learning and schooling is about helping them to see that they have a role and contribution to make and that school is not the threatening place they perhaps remember from their own school days. Virtually, all parents value schooling, but many believe it is the teacher's job. Without a genuine home–school partnership for learning getting children to make quantum leaps in achievement is still a way off. As Raffaele and Knoff (1999) and Epstein (2001) have shown, unless a whole-community, strategic approach to parental involvement is undertaken, and unless this work is embedded in the school's teaching and learning strategy and development plan, little return can be expected. We now discuss some important Australian instances where partnerships between communities, families and schools have produced productive outcomes in terms of shared responsibility for students' learning.

Illustrating Some of the Essentials at Work: Examples of Parental and Community Engagement in Learning

In Australia, Homel and colleagues' work in the *Pathways to Prevention* (Homel et al. 2006) project offers useful insights into factors that significantly impact on success at school for students moving through transition points. In this project, Freiberg et al. (2005) identified three strategies for preventative practices in disadvantaged communities: (1) building support structures outwards from a nucleus of child-focused programmes and (2) offering individualised programmes that are (3) underpinned by basic principles of family support. The basic tenet of the project is communities working together, and the community framework ensures that intervention activities:

1. Are responsive and relevant to community issues;
2. Actively work to overcome barriers to participation identified in the local context;
3. Provide opportunities for immediate and positive changes in the lives of participants; and
4. [Work] alongside other local agencies to support families' capacities not just to access but to shape institutional policy and practice in order to ensure that institutional and family systems are mutually supportive of children's development
   (Freiberg et al. 2005, p. 148)

As schools (particularly primary schools) provide a direct point of contact with most children and their families, Freiberg et al. (2005) found that programmes based on the above framework tended to promote child competencies which are in turn related to school success, to families' capacities to nurture child development and to nurture equitable relationships with schools. Of importance, however, was translating the framework and subsequent programmes into real and tangible practices with results with a broader community focus. As Freiberg et al. (2005, p. 154) put it,

> The fundamental problem is to move from genuine goodwill, expressed most notably by principals but also by classroom teachers and administrative staff, to a situation where schools develop practices that reflect a realisation that they need a close partnership with both families and community service organisations to achieve their core educational goals in disadvantaged areas.

Both Homel et al.'s (2006) and MacBeath et al. (2009) work send a clear message that investing in the wider community, in particular inter-agency support, is essential for engaging with, and impacting positively on, schools in challenging circumstances. Drawing on the notion that schools cannot do it alone, Homel et al.'s and MacBeath et al.'s research suggest that the alignment between school and community is critical to quality of leadership which puts learning at its heart. Communities are the terrain in which schools, and those within them, must navigate. Whilst schools can set to work improving areas in need of development, it must be remembered that students within those schools "are also situated in families, in

neighbourhoods, in peer groups who shape attitudes and aspirations often more powerfully than their parents or teachers" (MacBeath et al. 2007, p. 6).

At the outset we indicated that the "essentials" were interrelated and dependent upon contextual and cultural factors of the site. The significance of "context" has been widely recognised within the literature (cf. Sergiovanni 2001; MacBeath et al. 2009; Gladwell 2000; Fullan 2003) as something to which leadership needs to be acutely sensitive. As MacBeath and Dempster (2009) argue, context sensitivity – being able to "read" organisational and community circumstances – is essential in understanding and ultimately improving conditions for learning. A powerful point made by Swaffield and MacBeath (2008, p. 39) serves to highlight the power of context sensitivity:

> [We] are not restricted to responding to context; we can help shape it, especially at the micro-level of our immediate sphere of influence. The effect of context is what makes it such a strong contender for consideration for those exercising leadership – changing the situation can be both a stimulus and a support for altering behaviour.

We next demonstrate how an Education Alliance has supported meaningful engagement of the school community in improving schooling.

The Education Alliance

Research into the need for alliances and networks in the educational context suggests that new conceptions of community are replacing traditional hierarchies (Chapman 2003). In other words, as school networks create structures that decentralise power and distribute organisational resources through the network, they also enhance school capacity for reform (Wohlstetter et al. 2003). Networks vary in size and scope, but all are committed to dialogue, cooperation and solidarity in the interest of students' learning experiences (O'Neill 1996). The Education Alliance highlighted here provides a practical demonstration of what is possible when schools look outside their local networks to find solutions to local problems.

Prior to 1998, schools in Queensland were organised into clusters managed by a regional structure. To maintain collegiality, the principals and deputy principals in these clusters met to discuss systemic imperatives and share stories about their schools. Dissatisfied with the level of meaningful action that these meetings generated, a group of educators within a specific cluster located within city boundaries in south-east Queensland made the first moves to develop what is now known as the Education Alliance.

MacBeath et al. (2007) suggest that "schools that generate sustained improvement tend to act strategically, first self-reviewing and reflecting, gathering and using appropriate evidence, and then act collaboratively to build capacity for further improvement" (MacBeath et al. p. 17). The Education Alliance consists of ten schools (seven primary and three secondary) affiliated to the local university. The pursuits of the Education Alliance serve in excess of 7,000 students, over 500

teachers and many pre-service teachers studying at the university. As Harry, one of the founding Education Alliance members notes:

> When we went into the alliance we knew we wanted to do something different but we weren't quite sure what it was and we had all these meetings that were going nowhere and eventually said "look we'll pull out for two days quality time and thrash this out" and the process we went through was just to pull up what were the shared issues for all of us for the students…we just happened to have that conference at the university and then before the two days were finished they were an integral part of the whole process so that it became a three sector alliance – primary, secondary and tertiary – and the shared issues that come out or continue to come out just lead to constructive action. (Jervis-Tracey 2005b)

Rather than just being related in terms of geographical proximity, the schools within the Education Alliance are overtly associated with each other in forms of connections that have been deliberately established and worked on in pursuit of common interests and goals. The Education Alliance functions both horizontally and vertically. That is, it connects people and institutions, and connects "interdependent institutions" (Swilka 2003, p. 52). These types of connections, particularly between schools and universities, have been described as "symbiotic" relationships involving "mutually beneficial activities" (Swilka 2003, p. 59). Partnerships were forged between schools, communities and the university in order to service the students of this particular geographical area.

Projects within the Education Alliance included providing professional development in the areas of curriculum and assessment, shared development and placement of pre-service teachers, and collective bargaining for resources. Schools with highly specialised personnel would facilitate workshops based on the collective needs of the school. This not only developed the skills of the teachers, but also provided for a closer connection amongst the Alliance schools, thus strengthening other projects. The inclusion of the university in the Alliance resulted in a partnership that allowed for greater tailoring of professional experiences and opportunities to match appropriate teacher supervisors to pre-service teachers. For the university this contributed to more successful learning outcomes for their students; for the schools this meant they were able to encourage students to choose that particular area as a first preference or, where possible, offer employment. Given the size and number of schools in the Alliance there was a greater capacity to apply for funding from within the Education Department, and to seek competitive quotes for equipment and other materials from suppliers. Priorities for the Alliance were negotiated and pursued as a group, rather than through individual requests and contracts, resulting in greater resources for schools' funds.

Today, the university continues to be a member of the Education Alliance through its participation in forward planning and projects. One distinguishing feature of this particular type of loosely coupled organisational structure is that the schools within the Education Alliance have particular distinctive competencies and identities, whilst continuing to focus on the broader issues facing their community. This partnership has allowed for collaborative ventures with other members within the alliance as well as with partners outside of the alliance group. There is an implicit understanding that not all school and school community needs can be met in-house.

Rather, Education Alliance members seek each other's expertise in providing local solutions to local difficulties.

The Education Alliance is an inter-institutional network on a large scale. It works independently from the central and district offices, creating and developing its own opportunities through post-corporate initiatives in an effort to meet the needs of its respective school communities. It has developed as a distinctive learning community – a key initiative endorsed by the Queensland Government Smart State policy.

The Education Alliance comprises a number of schools involving teachers, administrators and academics. While there have been many instances of teacher-led networks and principal-led networks, this alliance claims to host flat leadership, allowing for the involvement of "people" rather than the distraction of "positions". As Edward, a member of the Education Alliance puts it:

> …the idea was actually supposed to be leaderless…but not leaderless in the sense of nobody doing anything, no one showing any leadership, but no particular one person being the CEO, the Manager, The Principal, that sort of thing. (Jervis-Tracey 2005b)

The individual members of the Education Alliance continue, simultaneously, as stand-alone constituents of their respective education systems, yet, together, form what Limerick et al. (1998) term "collaborative individualism". There are a number of key messages that we can take from this one example. First, this alliance recognises that no one site within the Education Alliance holds all the solutions, but rather members maximise their collective expertise, experience and resources. Furthermore the alliances are able to offer others expert educational services which, in turn, fuel their future endeavours. Second, networks provide schools and individuals that would otherwise be geographically or socially isolated with new ways of connecting with other institutions and like-minded people. They allow for greater communication and peer exchange, teacher professional development and greater political leverage that comes from collaboration (Chapman 2003). Third, grass-root networks and alliances share a commitment to providing localised support suited to the needs of the local community and working across schools to mobilise resources. Fourth, networks and alliances foreground a discourse of devolution as schools take on increasing responsibility and accountability and as they seek to provide for themselves opportunities and collective strength. Finally, networks and alliances open opportunities for the establishment and support of what MacBeath and Dempster (2009, p. 106) call a "learning dialogue" moving outside local networks to link with others.

The next section discusses specific ways in which communities and families have engaged with schools to provide robust support for students' transitions from school to work or to further learning. The examples emphasise the potential for communities and families to develop agency, initiating new ways of supporting existing school arrangements so that the combined effort improves outcomes and life opportunities for all students. Once again, increasing home school engagement rests on the belief that it is no longer feasible to devolve full responsibility for schooling outcomes to schools alone (MacBeath and Dempster 2009). Many parents

and communities are eager to find more meaningful ways to become involved in schooling. The following examples illustrate how some Australian communities and families are partnering with schools to help students make the transition from school to productive working lives.

Parents in Post-school Transitions Programmes

In Australia, the weight of preparing students for successful transition from school to work or further learning falls primarily to schools, mainly those serving secondary students. Yet Bryce et al. (2007) confirm the key role that families play in developing and sustaining educational and career aspirations and supporting their children's achievement. Students from low-SES backgrounds are often considered "at risk" of not making productive transitions from school, for a variety of reasons (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001). Bryce et al. (2007), who interviewed achievers from disadvantaged homes, report further that while many low-SES family members they interviewed took a close interest in young people's plans, they often could not provide practical assistance. Most at risk of making unsuccessful transitions are those children who live in families with a low household income or with no parent working, disabled children and those with low educational achievement (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services 2008). It is the families of these children who can most benefit from schools' networks with employers and industry and with other education institutions. These findings reinforce our view that social capital is one of the "essentials" for building strong family–school partnership and that its capacity to create success is interlinked closely with the other essentials: home/school partnerships; and school structures that support and encourage community leadership for learning.

A successful example of an Australian intervention along the lines of the Smith Family recommendation is the *PACTS* (*Parents as Career Transition Supports*) programme. It demonstrates an important step in building parents' capacity and agency to help children learn. The PACTS interventionist programme was funded by DEST and conducted on the Mornington Peninsula in 2003–2005 to assist school-to-work transitions among the indigenous population. It was part of a national government scheme to foster Career and Transition (CATS) pilot projects around Australia. The scheme was designed to empower parents of students in years 8 and 9 in ways that help them better support their children's transition from school to work and/or further education by building parents' knowledge of post-school pathways and today's job market. It consisted of interactive, small-group workshops through which parents received information on careers and transitions and training on communicating with their teenagers. Although this is the first Australian transitions programme to focus on equipping parents to better support their children's transition from schools to work/further education, it has the potential to strengthen home–school links more widely and build more meaningful

parental engagement with schools and learning. The PACTS intervention addressed four key issues for parents and students:

1. Most parents wanted to support their children's transitions but many felt ill-equipped to do so. PACTS provided up-to-date relevant information and skills to communicate with teenagers about transitions.
2. Many parents were concerned that their children might struggle to make a successful transition from school to work as a result of poor choices. The PACTS programme helped with allay parents' concerns about their children making "the right choice" about either subjects or career paths, by reassuring them that there is a range of viable pathways to employment.
3. Parents with lower levels of education were less likely to have talked to their children about careers and transitions. This changed after they attended PACTS workshops.
4. Most secondary students in participating schools would like to receive help from their parents in deciding what to do after leaving school. Parents were the group with whom young people were most likely to have discussed the topic (Bedson and Perkins 2006, p. iii).

We now present a proposal for actualising leadership for learning in a "community" that includes families, schools and students: that re-imagines the place that all stakeholders might take in leading learning inside and outside schools and across the various sites that might become available in the future.

An (im)modest Proposal

Prior research and practice presents a substantial platform for moving forward in the quest to build stronger, more innovative and inclusive partnerships between communities, families and schools. The impediments and essentials for engaging all parents in their children's learning at home and at school (as discussed above) have led us to distil three interrelated factors that must be addressed in any new proposal for building, strengthening and sustaining robust home–school learning partnerships.

The three factors need to include strategies that move beyond narrow typologies of parental involvement; the need to shift cultural assumptions about who leads learning; and the need to create shared learning and leadership spaces. We argue that attempts at practical change must be based on authentically re-negotiated cultural assumptions about disadvantage, learning and leadership and must include at least the following considerations. Change is premised on the public acknowledgment of the central place that *all* families have in leading learning; so much so that those underrepresented community members and families will no longer be seen and continue to see themselves as outsiders invisible to the educational enterprise. The current tension over whether the best possible partnerships are built by bringing the school into the community or by bringing the community into the school

needs to be addressed according to particular home and school contexts. The issue of re-contextualising school structures so that they are relevant to the communities they serve is crucial. Addressing these factors will be complicated in contexts of disadvantage where social, cultural and economic capital are proportionately low.

We believe that disengagement of disadvantaged parents and communities in schools and children's learning is neither inevitable nor predetermined. In Australia the issue of parental engagement is once again at the epicentre of policy initiatives, recognising that increased parental engagement with schools and learning will lead to academic achievement that in turn produces a substantial platform for building social and economic success throughout life. The Australian *Family-Schools Partnerships Framework* (DEST 2008) is a mandate for challenge and change, especially for building trusting relationships between disadvantaged communities, families and schools, as has been argued, and a prerequisite for enhancing social capital.

At this point there is no evidence available as to the national impact of the Australian Families-School framework on families' engagement. We propose a revised notion of partnership-building between disadvantaged communities, parents, school leaders and teachers. We move from the more familiar practice where communities and parents are invited to fit into and enhance existing school structures, to a preferred model of research intervention designed to review and report on stakeholder agency in which there are sustained opportunities for dialogue between parents, school leaders and teachers and students. Briefly, we propose that new partnerships between communities and parents who are least likely to engage with schools and learning can be built up through the provision of a safe haven where parents, school leaders and teachers can share dialogue and reflect on expectations and aspirations for their students and for themselves. We propose that this be a shared opportunity for all to learn to (re)construct stories of their past relationships with their children's schooling and to imagine preferred ways of being involved and engaged in leading learning while simultaneously building social capital. Personal storying and re-storying (Clandinin and Connelly 1996, 1998) recognises the local complexity and heterogeneity of disadvantaged parents and community members. Dialogue and critical reflection on personal beliefs and assumptions underpinning past, present and future plans for engaging in and leading learning is seen in this model as a mechanism for changing future practice. It implies a recasting of prior mindsets and in the process contributing to more widespread success in the implementation of the Australian *Family-Schools Partnerships Framework* (DEST 2008). Such a model responds to the challenge by enabling those underrepresented in learning to take an agentive role in interrupting that cycle of blame assigned mostly to disadvantaged parents for their perceived lack of interest in their child's schooling. The proposal for change is built on three premises:

1. *Moving beyond narrow typologies of parental involvement*: Until now, no cross-country empirical evidence has been gathered that endorses sustained ways of engaging disadvantaged parents, school leaders and teachers in a partnership where they can learn together to think differently about who should or could lead learning in schools and at home. Creating an environment where the learning

community engages in critical reflection is a prerequisite to breaking down the 'them and us' mindset that currently exists in too many cases between families and schools. A "bottom-up" approach to partnership challenges the top-down deficit models of schooling "at risk" students, a self-perpetuating approach, the success of which is not supported by any evidence (Hanafin and Lynch 2002). Collaborative intervention between schools and disadvantaged parents will extend the nature of home–school partnerships. More familiar typologies of parental involvement (e.g., Epstein 1995) provide a useful but limited means of enacting parental engagement in schooling and leave little scope for building parents' and schools' agency to challenge the more familiar model. Typologies, by nature, offer a "one size fits all" solution that does not encourage parents, school leaders or teachers to question the status quo. Further, typologies can impose a mindset of accountability on parents and schools where parental engagement is assessed against a hierarchy of (too often inadequate) performance standards. Through parents learning how to engage with schools, and schools with parents and communities, the two can re-imagine and plan for positive trajectories for student outcomes.

2. *Shifting cultural assumptions as to who leads learning*: The problem of engaging disadvantaged parents, school leaders and teachers through learning new ways of engaging in leadership for learning has not been a high priority in research and practice. Disadvantaged parents have often been seen as leaving schools as responsible for creating a "culture of expectation, aspiration and optimism" for their children's learning (MacBeath et al. 2007, p. 69). By implementing new projects whereby disadvantaged parents might learn to lead, school can become instrumental in challenging the hierarchical leadership models that still exist and which often tend to disenfranchise parents.

3. *Creating shared learning and leadership spaces*: A model of shared or distributed leadership will work to flatten leadership structures between homes and schools (Spillane et al. 2001; MacBeath and Dempster 2009). Studies of home–school relations have not yet focused on the innovative uses of dialogue and reflection between parents and schools in ways that engage parents, school leaders and teachers together in learning how to share leadership for learning. For example, a sustained model of collaborative "learning circles" where participants are open to telling and listening to each other's stories can lead to new assumptions about who is expected to do what in relation to children's learning. In the main, schools have been more comfortable with limited partnerships based on parents' involvement in school-initiated activities. The inventive use of home–school dialogue is proposed as a way forward, one which interrupts deficit views of disadvantaged parents and reframes their potential for learning and leadership.

Despite unprecedented growth in the field of narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly 2000), storytelling has not been used as a way of building partnerships between schools and home, with a focus on learning. For parents not used to engagement with schools, storytelling provides a social space for them to have a voice and be listened to respectfully (see Johnson 2009). The use of storytelling as

a way of achieving mutual understanding is proposed as a means to contribute to more widespread success in the implementation of the Australian *Family-School Partnerships Framework* (DEST 2008). It responds to persisting challenges designed to enable those parents who have been regarded by themselves and schools as deficit carers, to take an agentive role alongside the perceived expert educators in schools. It offers a pathway which can interrupt the cycle of blame and replace it with renewed cultural expectation, aspiration and optimism about the part disadvantaged parents and communities might play in leading learning. Through storytelling the acceptance of a subordinate social position and lack of mobility is replaced by an inclusive model which encompasses parents, leaders and teachers.

Concluding Comments

Increased parental engagement in children's learning can potentially increase rates of retention, participation and attainment in education and training and lead to more fulfilling life trajectories. As schools respond to the rapidly changing social currents, the nature of both leadership and learning requires radical revision.

The key message from the Delors report (1996) was the moral imperative for leadership to embrace the notion of learning to live together; learning to know; learning to do; and learning to be. Community and family leadership for learning further the push for greater opportunities for diverse leadership roles within the school and community, extending the very nature of leadership. The space from which the Education Alliance emerged was created over time by the competing discourses of school-based management, the constraints placed on schools by the neo-corporate bureaucratic strategies employed by the central office, and the pressures of market competition (Jervis-Tracey 2005a). Within this context the Education Alliance has adopted its own way of operating which incorporates strategies such as capitalising on the strengths of the Alliance in order to develop areas of need, and seeking their own solutions to their local issues.

This chapter has discussed ways that disadvantaged communities and families might bridge the divide between home and school. There remains, however, an urgent need for take up of a sustainable model to support communities and families so as to enable effective transitions into more meaningful engagement, enhancing opportunities to lead learning within and across homes and schools.

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Part X
Afterword: What Have We Learned?

Chapter 66
Thinking and Acting Both Locally and Globally: What Do We Know Now and How Do We Continue to Improve?

John MacBeath and Tony Townsend

Introduction

The realisation of educational leadership is always set within a framework of possibilities and constraints derived from the cultural, political and economic contexts of education. As we read through these contributions from more than 30 countries and various jurisdictions within them we are struck by the extent to which context matters but also by the common concerns which rise above contextual constraints and define some of the universals of learning and leadership. We begin to grasp the importance of thinking and acting both locally and globally.

Thomas and Watson in Chap. 13 quote Ball's contention that 'educational policies framed within these contexts define what school leadership is at any given point in time'. To what extent do these collected papers confirm or challenge that conclusion? To what extent is leadership a captive of its political circumstance and to what extent can school leaders 'fly below the radar' or even influence its policy trajectory?

In the case of South Africa, as Naicker (Chap. 25) shows, there is little wriggle room for headteachers who are directly in the firing line of political pressure. State President Zuma has, on a number of occasions, made it clear that while recognising the problems that school principals confront, there will be an increasing focus on their performance as, it is claimed, 'school academic performance is highly correlated with the abilities and commitment of the [school] principal' and that 'a school stands or falls on its leadership … school principals are critical to the improvement of our levels of learner performance'.

This is what we have come to understand as 'high stakes' and why 'miserable' and 'frustrated' are words used in Dean Fink's accounts (Chap. 33) of what it can mean to be a principal in the U.S. while half a world away in China Qian and

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Walker (Chap. 14) describe principals' work lives as 'uncomfortable, increasingly uncertain and fraught with tensions'. The source of tension is the difference between 'sollen' (duty) and 'wollen' (aspiration).

These two terms are used by Schley and Schratz (Chap. 17) to depict the leadership dilemma in Austria where government interventions cause an overload problem 'by piling disconnected policies one upon another, leading to a sense of confusion and uncertainty. This in turn, they suggest, leads to de-energising effects, fragmentation of priorities and increasing dilemmas as school leaders are pulled between duty and aspiration.

Commenting in a Canadian context, Leithwood and colleagues (Chap. 20) describe a 'blizzard of initiatives' flowing into schools, constrained by high stakes tests and concomitant accountability and a whole raft of factors that 'lie outside the control of even the most skilled local leaders'. A 'synergistic effects' approach recognises the many different sources of influence on school and classroom conditions which impact on student learning.

The problem is, writes Muijs (Chap. 9), that the causal mechanisms underlying leadership effects are often undertheorised, overly simplistic with untested models and prescriptions in the field are both untested and extensive. He counsels that 'where causal mechanisms are posited they need to take into account, at the very least, mediated, and preferably reciprocal models'.

The push and pull between sollen and wollen appears to cross all international boundaries. 'Everything has a number to it', says a principal in Reitzug and West's U.S. study (Chap. 12), 'I have to make sure all those numbers are increasing, that the trend is upward on all pieces of data except for things like suspension rates'. It is a reminder of Diane Ravitch's (2010) damning indictment of a system in which numerical accountability takes precedence over learning. Yet, the accountability virus extends beyond the U.S. In Denmark Moos (Chap. 5) describes a progressive trend which is narrowing the compass of schooling. It is manifest in a shift away from the traditional Danish vision of the comprehensive and broad 'Democratic Bildung' (a process of spiritual formation encompassing, knowledge and skills). In the Middle East Al Barwani (Chap. 8) describes the need to respond and comply to local and global pressures and the need to detach from age-old education cultural traditions. In Australia, Clarke and Wildy (Chap. 48) comment that 'the ability to focus on leading learning and, on the other hand, the ability to manage the multiple accountability demands determined by the policy environment is considered a significant challenge in the Australian quest to prepare and support school leaders more effectively'.

The Economic Imperative

The significant challenge in Australia, as elsewhere, derives from a prevailing view of knowledge as an economic commodity and the school as serving the national drive to be placed competitively in the international marketplace. Thomas and

Watson describe the adoption by policy makers of human capital as the *raison d'etre* for public investment in education, so fuelling an instrumental conception of schooling as a tool for producing effective workers who can successfully compete in global markets. Australian education policy documents now typically begin with an economic policy justification such as "reform in the way education and training is delivered is critical to driving our future productivity" (Council of Australian Governments 2008, no page). Under these neo-liberal influences, write Thomas and Watson, 'Australian school leaders are expected to achieve quality school education in terms of managerialist concepts such as efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, with scant acknowledgement of the complexity of their role and the contradictions within the quality policy agenda'.

In Singapore, writes Dimmock and Goh (Chap. 15) 'the close interconnections between education and economic growth are apparent…to an even greater extent than in most developed countries'. Maintaining 'the Singapore brand' means maintaining its pre-eminent international reputation in student attainment in core curriculum subjects while education is seen as the means of developing human capital, with an emphasis on flexibility, versatility and adaptability to meet emerging economic needs.

In Malaysia, which looks enviously over the border to Singapore, the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006–2010) seeks to establish an advanced industrialised economy through educational priorities designed to enhance the nation's global competitiveness, human capital development, distribution of income and wealth, while, no less ambitiously, improving on the quality of life (Fatt Hee Tie, Chap. 25).

Recalling Prime Minister Callaghan's 'Great Debate' in the U.K., premised on the schools' key role in the nation's economic competiveness, Jim O'Brien (Chap. 6) charts the rise and rise of what is no longer a 'debate' but a prevailing discourse.

> This approach initially promoted by the 'New Right' has developed into the dominant discourse in schooling. In England, especially, the key to these changes is increased indirect rule from the centre allowed by the promotion of a target culture of school development and improvement plans; clear prescription of the curriculum; acceptance of and compliance with teacher standards; external inspection of school standards and the publication of reports and league tables (often described as a 'naming and shaming' agenda) plus control of teacher professional identity aligned to technicist or instrumental competences. Overall, such measures mean that to all intents and purposes teachers have been shorn of professionalism.

If the economic imperative is the sollen, for most principals and teachers the wollen is to lead learning. Learning for life, learning which endures beyond the last day of school, is founded on motivation and engagement. In Poland, writes Mazurkiewicz (Chap. 55), the age of dictat and bureaucracy can no longer expect compliance to instructions and action blueprints. Rather their starting point has to be a deep understanding of human nature and human learning, motivation and changing needs.

Where the sollen and wollen meet is illustrated in Qian and Walker's depiction of those in leadership positions 'forced to engage in both front-stage and back-stage performances when they play-out their role of leaders for learning'. Front of stage

are the demands and accountability imperatives, back stage is the inescapable commitment to a quality of leadership which is *for* learning in all its complex manifestations.

However, the sollen and the woollen are seen by Bogotch as being part of a historical competition, not so much for different groups within the society but for the U.S. society itself. He argues (Chap. 2) '[f]rom the beginning, two historical themes, political governance (e.g., public welfare) and economic power (e.g., property rights), have dominated educational discourses.' He continues 'we tend to see current reform(s) only within the narrow context of the present.'

Perhaps in this we might take some comfort that the conditions under which principals and headteachers are working, living and sometimes dying, in their jobs, might not last forever. Is this focus on learning as an economic priority something that is a historical event, one that might turn and change in the future, back towards a place where learning once again is seen as the culmination of human interaction? Where together, teachers and students, and others that interact with them, learn to live with each other in a way that promotes a set of *human* qualities, not just a set of intellectual ones? Perhaps it requires a move from the current global perspective of competition to one of global collaboration. We have seen what the everlasting search for increasing growth (i.e., wealth) has brought the world to in the last few years, but so far it appears that many countries have not learned from the experience.

Continuous growth is not sustainable, for the triple bottom line reasons argued by Elkington (1994), where

> we must consider the economic environment and the social environment as well as the natural environment for true sustainability to emerge. If we only consider the natural environment and the economic environment we will have viability but not sustainability, if we only consider the natural environment and the social environment we will have bearability but not sustainability and if we only consider the social environment and the economic environment we will have equity but not sustainability. (Townsend 2010, p. 13).

From an educational perspective we might ask:

- Are schools equitable for all students?
- Are schools bearable for all students?
- Are all schools viable in the current climate? (Townsend 2010 p. 13)

If the answer is 'no' to any of these questions, we would have to suggest the current education system is unsustainable. Since many educators would argue that the answer to all three questions is 'no', then we could suggest that the system is seriously out of balance. If the sollen and the woollen are out of balance, is leadership for learning the way back to sustainability?

Leadership for Learning and Instructional Leadership

Leadership for learning is the title and focus of this volume. In some chapters, this is equated with the term 'instructional leadership'. It may appear at first sight that there is little conceptual daylight between instructional leadership in the various

forms described here, and leadership for learning. Both are informed by the same, or similar, bodies of evidence and it is easy to assume that they mean the same. Yet these surface similarities perhaps conceal more than they reveal and it is worth exploring a little deeper the assumptions these two closely related ideas contain.

The emergence of the term instructional leadership may be dated from around the 1980s, owed in large part to the school effectiveness research which consistently included leadership among the 5 (Lezotte 1991), 6 (Cunningham et al. 2006), 18 (Townsend 1994), 11 (Sammons et al. 1995) or 12 (Mortimore 1998) indicators. The emphasis on instruction is to the fore among Lezotte's five key criteria.

- Strong principal leadership and attention to the quality of instruction
- A pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus
- An orderly, safe climate conducive to teaching and learning
- Teacher behaviours that convey the expectation that all students are expected to obtain at least a basic mastery of simple skills
- The use of measures of pupil achievement as the basis for programme evaluation

The quality of instruction and instructional focus appears to refer to teaching rather than to learning, and leadership often implicitly refers to the 'man in the principal's office' (Wolcot 1973). Hallinger describes the widespread adoption of instructional leadership as the 'model of choice' by most principal leadership academies (2003, p. 329). The most 'popular conceptualisations' (p. 332) of the term include:

- The role of the school principal in coordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction in the school,
- A unitary role of the elementary school principal,
- Focused on poor urban schools in need of substantial change in which instructional leaders were 'strong, directive leaders',
- Hands-on principals, 'hip-deep' in curriculum and instruction,
- Goal-oriented, focused on the improvement of student academic outcomes,
- Culture builders, creating an 'academic press' that fosters high expectations and standards for students, as well as for teachers.

The trend within instructional leadership studies has been to focus on the relationship between leadership, as embodied by the qualities of the principal, on the one hand, and student outcomes on the other. This does, however, present a tangled territory through which to try and navigate a path. The Witziers et al (2003) paper, *The Elusive Search for an Association*, tells the story of a decade of study in which it has become progressively more difficult for both 'leadership' and 'outcomes' to be pinned down and measured with reliability and validity. On the basis of her own extensive review Levacic (2005) concludes:

> Given the vast literature on educational leadership and management and the presumption of policy-makers that the quality of educational leadership affects student outcomes, the actual evidence for a casual relationship is relatively sparse (Levacic 2005, p. 198)

As Levacic (2005) reminds us, most studies assume a one way relationship between leaders and learners, whereas the effects are, in fact, reciprocal as

discussed by Hallinger and Heck in Chap. 27. That is, leaders learn from students and from teachers, as well as the other way round, the subtleties of this process requiring more fine grained qualitative teasing out of where influence and impact lie. As Robinson et al (2009) concluded in their meta-analysis of leadership 'traditional understanding of leadership focuses on individuals in positions of authority and in a way that is rooted exclusively in individual talent'. They add, 'But thinking about leadership in a way that is tied to outcomes makes it easier to gauge if leadership is effective, as opposed to whether an individual has certain skills' (p. 23). And from this perspective:

> Leadership is the potential outcome of interactions between groups of people rather than specific traits or skills of a single person. This definition is also more inclusive and therefore relevant to any organisation in any culture (p. 24)

Part of the problem lies in the breadth and diversity, and indeed ambiguity, of the principal's role, seen by many critics as too ambitious, too complex and realistically untenable. Cuban (1988), for example, has argued that efforts by principals to act as instructional leaders have had to contend with structural and normative factors which constrain the kinds of power and initiative implicit in the expansive, and expanding, role of that office. As Lambert (1998) argued a decade later, school principals occupy a middle management position in which their authority to command is severely limited by the need to meet the expectations of those above and below them in the hierarchy. And a decade further on still, 'in many countries, the men and women who run schools are overburdened, underpaid and near retirement. And there are few people lining up for their jobs' (Pont et al. 2008, p. 5).

Commenting on the principalship in one Canadian province, Burger, Nadirova, Brandon, Garneau and Gonnet (Chap. 16) point to the diminishing latitude for school leaders to prioritise instruction as 'workloads have become increasingly complex and potentially onerous with more sophisticated administrative and managerial responsibilities and greater accountability for results'. 'Not getting to see the weans [the wee ones]' was the plaint from a primary school headteacher in Scotland, whose frustration at being overwhelmed by incessant demands from above struck a common note across the study (MacBeath et al. 2009). It was the primary disincentive for serving teachers and those described as 'career deputies' to aspire to headship, a finding replicated elsewhere, as in New Zealand, for example, where in common with Scotland, the salary differential has been seen as insufficient incentive to take on the burden of office.

'New' Instructional Leadership

As studies have proliferated, what may be contained under the instructional leadership umbrella has widened – allowing, in Hartley's terminology (2007, p. 202) 'conceptual elasticity'. As noted earlier by Schlechty (2002) with respect to the leadership discourse more generally, instructional leadership appears to increasingly

encompass as many meanings as there are studies, a Humpty Dumpty use of language, as a good egg once remarked to Alice – 'When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.'

In more technical language instructional leadership has become a 'multidimensional construct' (Heck et al. 1990, p. 122) as can be seen in a recent U.S. government newsletter (2005).

> Effective school leadership today must combine the traditional school leadership duties such as teacher evaluation, budgeting, scheduling, and facilities maintenance with a deep involvement with specific aspects of teaching and learning. Effective instructional leaders are intensely involved in curricular and instructional issues that directly affect student achievement….Teaching and learning must be at the top of the priority list on a consistent basis. Leadership is a balance of management and vision.

While this document widens the notion of leadership to encompass a broader range of leadership actors and activities, 'new' instructional leadership, as proposed by Halverson and colleagues 'pushes the debate beyond the traditional categories of instructional, managerial, and transformational practice to a new, and more specific conception of creating accountable learning systems in schools' (Halverson et al. 2007, p. 160). For them the solution lies in a tighter less ambiguous linkage between what leaders do and the instructional outcomes they effect.

What they describe as Data-Driven Instructional Systems in Schools provide school leaders with a guiding framework which enables them to 'reshape and refine internal accountability systems to meet the demands of external accountability systems' (p. 161), establishing a two-way information flow connecting classroom practice and external accountability measures. Establishing this information flow, they argue, means pushing for tightened linkages of teaching and leadership, teacher collaboration, professional learning aligned with instructional goals, and closely monitored instructional outcomes.

In Chap. 49, English describes the 30 years of using the curriculum management audit as a means of improving student learning and the paradoxes that such an audit, as a machine bureaucracy, has implicitly inbuilt. The major one of these is that the more tightly the constraints placed on them, the more resistance those constraints meet in the school and classroom, thus defeating the purpose of the constraint in the first place.

Is this a backward step or is it a Realpolitik which adjusts its terms of reference to an unforgiving policy climate? Is it, following Reitzug and West's counsel, a case of rendering unto Caesar that which is Ceasar's, a form of pragmatic compromise, a twin track approach to learning and performativity? Are leaders presented here with a solution or a dilemma?

Do 'closely monitored instructional outcomes' define the clear blue water between instructional leadership and leadership for learning? To what extent is the latter focused less on outcomes and tight linkages and more interested in the mosaic or patterning of relationships that create the conditions in which leadership and learning flourish and are conjoined?

To a certain extent such considerations are based upon what we might view as being 'learned' or even more basic understandings of what it means to be a human

being. It seems that current definitions of 'being human' are aligned to an understanding of a human being an economic unit and that being learned is having the skills for personal economic sustainability, certainly if we take success at school as any sort of starting point for becoming learned. Later in life, in many ways we justify ourselves as being human in terms of our workplace titles, rather than in a host of other possible ways of describing who we are. Somehow, the idea of being learned has become a nasty word, brought almost to its logical limits in the U.S. tea-party brigade, where being 'intellectual' is seen as being un-American. Given this, how do we chart our way forward?

Mosaics, Patterns and Widwifery

Describing school cultures as mosaics and patterns encourages us to focus on what Mitchell, Sackney (Chaps. 3 and 53) and Mazurkiewicz (Chap. 56) describe as the ecology of the school. Ecology, in application to people and organisations, may be described as the 'living relations of people to each other and their surroundings'. It is in those inter-relationships that, as Leithwood suggests, we begin to understand patterns of distribution, identifying 'the relative effects of these patterns on the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement' (Leithwood et al. 2004, p. 35). In Andy Hargreaves language 'patterns' are depicted as 'emotional geographies' (2008, p. 137) – moral, cultural, professional, political and physical – which help 'identify the supports for, and threats to, the basic emotional bonds and understandings of schooling that arise from forms of distance or closeness in people's interactions or relationships'.

In parallel with Halverson et al.'s harder edged, 'new' instructional leadership, researchers are beginning to explore and give emphasis to a softer edge. As Hartley (2007) has pointed out, 'ironically, it is just at the point when organizations and management have reached their most clinical and technocratically rational by emphasizing targets, performance, prescription, compliance and control, that a compensatory discourse has emerged that highlights and celebrates the emotions' (quoted in Hargreaves 2008, p. 132)

The emotional life of leaders and teachers plays an important role in what Leithwood terms 'soft' mediators. These prove hard to run a rule over yet are vital in their impact on values and attitudes to learning.

> It has struck me that perhaps the two issues that are really at the heart of what we are trying to discover are first of all, certainly, the leadership practices that seem to matter but the things that mediate their effects on kids. What we've discovered in general terms is that those mediators are soft, it's kind of the soft things about the schools and the people in the schools that seem to carry the influence of leaders.

Andy Hargreaves' characterisation of teachers as 'midwives' (2008, p. 138) may appear to be drawn from the same metaphorical source as 'delivery', the term currently favoured by policy makers to describe what teachers do. However, these two ideas could not be further apart. 'Delivering the curriculum' casts the teacher as the

intermediary between pre-determined government policy and the class. Midwifery casts the teacher as the intermediary between the child and the learning environment into which he or she will emerge, grow and flourish.

We seek for understanding in the day-to-day life of classrooms, in the minutiae, in the myriad activity of school busyness, write Lieberman and Friedrich:

> In many studies of leadership, one of the problems is that leadership is daily and takes place amongst a myriad of activities and actions that accrue over time. Typical data collection strategies -interviews, surveys, or even observations and focus groups - often fail to show the interconnections and variety of activities, strategies and tactics that people come to learn over time when they take on leadership responsibilities (Lieberman and Friedrich 2008, p. 39).

The myriad activities of school and classroom life, the soft, horticultural, language of growth, nurturing, blossoming has, in many national administrations (as reiterated frequently in this volume), been replaced by the tough, commercial language of targets, standards, measures and value-added, a discursive shift which owes much to the Thatcher-Reagan 'Weltanschauung', or world view, in which the ultimate felony was to be 'child-centred'.

While the term 'instruction' and instructional leadership have been widely adopted in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, some academics there take exception to the terminology and to its underlying premises. For example, in a paper presented at the Australian Research Association, MacNeill et al (2003) contend that 'in the wash-up of the school effectiveness research and a growing disenchantment with the lack of change in schools, instructional leadership was promoted as the harbinger of change and the salvation of schooling' (p. 2). They go on to argue that both the use of *instruction* and *leadership* are confused and confusing, that 'instruction' fails to consider the discourse that helped to create the learning environment, the influence of the class culture, the affect of the teacher's body language, the promotion of academic risk taking, the nature of democratic decision making, with a focus on principals' behaviours to the detriment of a wider focus on the agency of other members of the school community.

What Is in a Name?

What is then distinctive about leadership for learning? To what extent does that combination of words convey a quite different message from that of instructional leadership?

Words are clearly important. 'We create the world we experience through the language in which we recognise it and in our reflections' writes Moos (2008, p. 232). 'We' (policy makers and researchers) have created a world in which the invention and re-invention of language conveys both overt and subliminal messages. The plethora of adjectives that have progressively been attached to 'leadership', have one thing in common – their focus is on leadership with 'instructional leadership' as one of its many variants, if indeed the pre-eminent one in contemporary discourse.

By contrast, leadership for learning gives pride of place to the preposition 'for'. This is, in essence, a *proposition*, one that foregrounds learning and complexifies, rather than simplifies, what that word may mean.

Whereas much of the instructional leadership literature reduces learning to 'outcomes', leadership for learning embraces a much wider, developmental view of learning. Nor is its focus exclusively on student achievement. It sees things through a wide angle lens, embracing professional, organisational and leadership learning. It understands the vitality of their interconnections and the climate they create for exploration, inquiry and creativity. Its concern is for all of those who are part of a learning community.

Two Canadian contributions in this volume highlight the differing focal points in leadership for learning. For Pedwell and colleagues (Chap. 34) the prior concern is with student attainment as the 'bottom line'. For Mitchell and Sackney (Chap. 53) environmental synergies are foregrounded. Are these two sides of the same coin or are they underpinned by quite different assumptions and implicit purposes and priorities?

Both views start from a premise of 'growth'. In the Pedwell et al. paper a key principle is to 'support growth with a focus on results'. It asks us to address the question – a bottom line – what results are being achieved and what responsibilities does the principal have in delivering on these? They put 'better outcomes, broadly defined, at the centre of everything we do and that we want schools to do'.

Mitchell and Sackney's contribution draws on differing assumptions and metaphors. Their point of departure is with learning communities 'unfolding from within the fabric of school life'. The primary task of leadership is to reflect and respond to the conditions that prevail in the school, 'to conceptualize learning systems from an ecological perspective, to examine the mutual influences and interconnections among various aspects of school life, and to frame and reframe conditions so as to enhance and energize teaching and learning'.

It could be argued that the first perception, which could be termed the political perspective, narrows the focus of what schools do in very limiting ways, so that political 'sound-bites' can be provided. So a school is either effective or it is not, it is successful or failing. Looking any further into the complexities of how these terms came about or whether in fact they are true in the first place, is not what a politician wants, because all he/she is likely to get is a 20 second quote on the nightly news and how much can you say in 20 seconds? Even categorising schools into moving, cruising, strolling, struggling and sinking (Stoll and Fink 1996) is flirting with danger, because anyone in a school can tell you that with the thousand or more things that every school, anywhere in the world, have to do, they are not universally moving, struggling or sinking in every one of them. Even 'failing' schools are likely to do some things well, even if it is just the annual musical.

The second perspective might be considered the people perspective, bringing with it, all the complexity that people have in their lives, multiplied by the number of people involved in the organisation. In these circumstances, there are no quick sound bites, there are stories and each story provides a rich historical perspective of what learning can be, and is for some still.

Could it be that we are reduced to those two time-honoured strands of leadership, task and people? If we focus mostly on the task we get one kind of leadership, perhaps the first one described above, where everything is relegated secondary to student outcomes. If we focus mostly on people, we get a different kind of leadership, some would argue that it could be leadership without purpose, a game that we play without consequences. However, it is the bridge between these two that the critical areas emerge, when task and people are equally focused and equally supported. The ecological perspective provides this, where understanding who we are working with actually assists us in producing results, but results that are much richer than a focus of a single task. Perhaps here is where balance is achieved and leadership *for* learning can come into focus.

Susan Lovett describes the alternating nature of leadership and followership which changes in accordance with the particular expertise which comes to the fore in any given set of circumstances. She quotes David Frost's view of human agency as fluid and value-driven.

> All members of a learning community have the capacity to influence [one another] because being an agent is what being a human being is all about. Being an agent or having agency involves having a sense of self encompassing particular values and a cultural identity, and being able to pursue self-determined purposes and goals through self-conscious strategic action.

When schools are not alive to their incipient agency routine practice and the everyday discourse are, by default, shaped by policy pressures. In the competitive pressure on targets and accountability learning and teaching are constrained by the demands of organisational convenience, and slowly and insidiously absorbed by students into the intellectual and emotional bloodstream. Learning comes to be seen as what happens in classrooms and leadership is seen as the province of those who make the big decisions about the future. All too easily, learning as a vibrant shared activity, ceases to be the main consideration. All too easily the potential to lead learning is left to others.

By contrast learning-led schools are places in which student learning is inseparable from professional learning and the culture is one in which learning flows across boundaries of role and status. The professional learning environment sets the stage for the student learning environment. It is a stage set generously. It is one in which the continuing quest for knowledge and understanding is embedded in the culture but also with an impact on structures so that they no longer constrain but liberate.

As we discover through these pages, learning thrives in an environment which impels it, just as leadership comes immediately to the surface in a situation which demands it. There is an inherent tension between structure and agency, between the constraining conventions of school which lock people into roles, hierarchies, subjects, protocols and the capacity to act and effect change. A strong sense of individual and collective agency is what can open the connecting doors between leadership and learning. When teachers, students, managers, governors, support staff and parents are alive to this there is a liberating sense of conjoint power to recreate the school as a learning community.

Where leadership and learning find common ground is in their essential mission to disturb the status quo. Both are subversive activities. Learning is about challenging inert ideas (Whitehead 1929), about moving beyond the comfort zone (Vygotsky 1962), reframing understanding (Bolman and Deal 1991) and about insight as the perception of things to come rather than the extension of things gone by (Heschel 1962). In very simple terms, learning is something I could not do yesterday that I can do today (Clinch 2001), but underneath this simplicity is a complex set of changes that have occurred, within the brain's structure, that allow new behaviours to emerge. As with inert ideas leadership needs irritations, write Schley and Schratz. The 'irritant' can, of course be simply 'irritating', knocking teachers off centre, demanding compliance to standards that have little intrinsic worth. International comparative studies such as PISA can also disturb complacency but with the danger that they may lead to less, rather than more, risk taking. The irritant may, on the other hand, be such as to promote growth and produce the pearl.

Leadership, like learning, takes people to a place where they initially had no desire to go, disturbing the comfort of the familiar. So we meet again and again in these chapters the idea of vision and leadership as 'visionary' for, as it is said, 'without vision the people perish' (Proverbs 29, p. 18).

Leaders Learning

Are leaders born or are they made? In common parlance we talk a lot about 'born leaders', and indeed there is some evidence to suggest that from an early age there are neurological factors which predispose self-direction and promote leadership qualities (Brass and Haggard 2007). Historically leaders have emerged rather than being taught and up until half a century ago school leaders also assumed office without any form of training but through demonstration of 'natural ability' or self-determination. Kenya, as Jwan and Ongondo describe it in Chap. 23, is not alone in selecting senior leaders based on experience as classroom teachers.

As these chapters reveal there is a view shared across continents that leadership can no longer be a matter of serendipity and opportunism but requires a more programmed approach. There is a growing acknowledgement that principalship, or headship, is a specialist occupation, that the role is increasingly complex and demanding and that the nature and scale of social change place new and often unforeseen demands on school which in turn require a prescient, anticipatory and a flexible leadership response. In Chap. 48 Clark and Wildy refer to the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) Capability Framework (see http://acel.org.au/index.php?id=1019&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=987&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=944&cHash=eba3ae44d5). The framework has three major elements, Leading Self for Learning, Leading Others for Learning and Leading Organisations for Learning, a move in the right direction. However, underneath these three areas are 11 capabilities and a total of 33 separate indicators to measure a leader's performance. For each of these 33 indicators, judgements can be made about where the

leader currently is on the continuum from 'Influencing within and beyond classroom' through 'Influencing within and beyond team' and 'Influencing within and beyond school' to 'Influencing within and globally beyond school'. Although designed as a model to support leaders to undertake periodical self-reviews, there are two possible side-effects to such a model. First, a potential school leader might look at the range of expectations and think again about applying for a leadership position and second, given past experience, one can easily see governments adopting such a model as a means of judging and compensating school leaders. So not only is the task complex, but sometimes those that are trying to help leaders do their job better, make it even more complex.

This imperative is met in some cases with a sense of urgency. In South Africa, as described by Naicker, leadership 'is a key weapon in our arsenal to turn under-performing schools around' (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 3). The Education Roadmap of Development Bank of Southern Africa (2008) specifically recommends 'a scaling up of practical management courses for school principals, deputy principals, Heads of Department and school district supervisors (ward managers). This, it is recommended, 'will help to achieve strengthened management capacity to ensure working districts and schools' (KZN Department of Education 2010, p. 3).

What practical management courses may entail is, however, a contested issue. Weinstein et al. (Chap. 18) report that in Chile 86% of current principals have taken educational administration courses, while only 1.5% have taken courses which focused on curricular matters. He notes that the Ministry of Education itself has acknowledged that in-service training of principals tends to be 'frontal and encyclopedic' paying scant attention to supporting and guiding the work of classroom teachers.

Pont, Nusche and Moorman's 2008 OECD report, which refers to the growing influence of leadership development programmes over the last 10–15 years, concludes that there is still a need for more coherent approaches to leadership development and that 'leadership development is broader than specific programmes of activity or intervention and can be done through a combination of formal and informal processes throughout the stages and contexts of leadership practice' (p. 133). Preparation for headship is but one, although critical, element in the continuum of leadership preparation.

In Chap. 21 Christine Forde identifies three predominant forms of professional development and 'the foundational idea upon which leadership development is premised'. These are:

- An apprentice-based approach where the prerequisite skills in leadership and management are required through experience in schools, that is learning 'on the job';
- A knowledge-based approach where masters level qualifications in the area of leadership and management are undertaken at a university;
- An experiential learning-based approach where there is the focus on structured sets of experiences to acquire the necessary understandings, skills and personal development.

These are not necessarily discrete approaches but all may be seen as inter-related elements on a continuum of developing expertise. An issue on which there is considerable consensus is that the second of these three approaches is insufficient, while the first (apprenticeship) robs incumbent leaders of the theoretical grounding which allows unforeseen events to be met with principled understanding. A planned set of structured experiences in and out of school appears to have the greatest prospect of success when it is ongoing and long term, when it pays attention to structuralist and culturalist issues (Bishop, Chap. 58), when it creates a seamless web of support for teacher growth and development (Zepeda, Chap. 41), when it facilitates dialogue, when there is a purposeful and concerted shift from administrative to pedagogical priorities (Vaillant, Chap. 32) and when there is a commitment to lead school reforms and put public education back into historical and cultural perspectives (Bogotch, Chap. 2).

However, Leithwood et al. (Chap. 20) ask us to go a step further in the way we conceptualise leadership and leadership development. They take issue with the professional development programmes aimed at enhancing the capacities of individual leaders. They cite England's National College for Leaders of School and Children's Services as a 'poster child' for large-scale, 'direct effects' approaches to leadership development. In similar vein, in the Australian state of Victoria the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership has developed 'an impressively large number of professional development modules for school leaders'. Leithwood at al. write:

> The primary assumption which appears to underlie the approach to leadership development in both of these cases is that focusing solely on improving the capacities of individual leaders and groups of leaders will somehow lead to widespread improvements in student learning'. This approach has a theory of action which leaves in a "black box" the variables connecting leadership to student learning.

Most effective interventions, they maintain, are planned and implemented with multiple layers of action and support at classroom, school and policy levels, not only among the actors in schools, but also at different levels within the school system (regional, district and local).

The Moral and Social Imperative

Perhaps the most challenging task of leadership is to address continuing social inequalities common to all countries represented here but manifested in different ways and with differing consequences. The historic triumvirate of gender, class and race remain to a greater or lesser extent, playing out in distinctive forms in relation to the socio-economic factors and the role and potency of schools in addressing them. As Vaillant describes them, schools are 'nested communities', not only internally but within local neighbourhoods, within local administrations/authorities or districts, states and countries but also increasingly within the global competitive policy environment.

The case study of New Zealand illustrates the nested character of inequality and the implications for leadership. As Russell Bishop (Chap. 58) puts it:

> The major social challenge facing today is the continuing social, economic and political disparities within our nation, primarily between the descendants of the European colonisers (Pākehā) and the indigenous Māori people. Although some progress has been seen in recent times, Māori continue to have higher levels of unemployment, are more likely to be employed in low-paying employment, have much higher levels of incarceration, illness and poverty than do the rest of the population, and are generally under-represented in the positive social and economic indicators of society'.

If specific references to Māori were taken out, this paragraph could be equally applied to African Americans, the Australian Aborigine and a host of other disenfranchised groups within the world community. Leadership, therefore, carries a moral responsibility as well as a strategic imperative to address these concerns by 'creating a means of changing the classroom, the culture of the school and the education system itself'. For Johnson and Jervis-Tracy (Chap. 65) this is premised on diverse leadership roles within the school and community, extending the very nature of leadership. As they argue, the stubborn resistance to closing the gap will require some creative thought, moving beyond tired approaches to parental involvement and community projects.

Their proposition, arising from the Australian *Family-Schools Partnerships Framework* (DEST 2008) is for different kinds of spaces and different kinds of relationships between schools and homes in the most disadvantaged of communities. Building trust is a prerequisite, realised through sustained opportunities for dialogue between parents, school leaders, teachers and students, implying 'a recasting of prior mindsets'. There are echoes here of Lawrence-Lightfoot's 'essential conversation' (2004) which is only able to take place when the longstanding imbalance of power between teachers and parents is no longer at issue. Johnson and Jervis-Tracy's 'new forms of partnership are nurtured through the provision of a safe haven where parents, school leaders and teachers can enjoy a shared dialogue as to aspirations for their students and for themselves'.

> We are dealing, it would seem, not so much with culturally deprived children as with culturally deprived schools. And the task to be accomplished is not to revise, and amend, and repair deficient children, but to alter and transform the atmosphere and operations of the schools to which we commit these children. Only by changing the nature of the educational experience can we change the product. To continue to define the difficulty as inherent in the raw material, the children, is plainly to blame the victim and to acquiesce in the continuation of educational inequality. (Ryan 1976, pp. 61–62)

From the Insane to the Profound

Quoting Einstein's famous definition of insanity as doing the same thing over and over while expecting different results, Fink concludes that regardless of how it is packaged, more and more of the same old approaches to leadership development

without profoundly changing our social vision and, within that larger picture, redefining the purposes of education and of educational leadership is just insane.

Since school effectiveness is one of those terms that seems to have guided policy and practice in schools for the last two decades, perhaps it is best that we start there. Townsend (2007, p. 952) argued that

> Given that context is so critical to performance, at the international, national and local levels, perhaps it is time to rethink the definition of what effectiveness means and who it applies to. It may well be that effectiveness might be interpreted differently at different levels, which suggests that we might consider what effectiveness means for school systems (states or even nations), for communities, for schools, for classrooms and for students.

The hope expressed by Mitchell and Sackney that 'the joy of learning becomes the norm', for students, for teachers and for school leaders, is no more than a fond hope without profoundly changing our social vision, without redefining the purposes of education and of educational leadership. This is true not only for schools but also for higher education as Tarawneh (Chap. 60) argues in the context of the Middle East. 'Arab countries need to be ready to implement change, even radical change, and more importantly, to be sure that their systems are setting up agencies, bodies and commissions that are capable of change'.

How would things change if we were judging the effectiveness of school systems, rather than schools themselves? What would be changed if part of the definition of 'an effective politician' was determined by whether or not all students achieved? What if politicians, as part of their terms of office, could only send their child to the local state-run school? Would we see some changes in how achievement was defined, or what aspects of the curriculum were considered important?

In Latin American countries, Ecuador, Chile, Mexico and Paraguay, each with very different political and socio-economic histories, there appears to be a common growing understanding that teachers should be less passive recipients of policy direction and become more active participants in shaping the educational process. Change is slow, 'made up of fragments or scattered attempts' write Aguerrando and Vezub in Chap. 49, and 'sustainability is weak' but, they maintain, leadership for learning has to start with reducing 'the traditional isolation of teachers' work, which confines them to the classroom, with little opportunity to share their work with colleagues and often without support or control. Both features are key to the professionalization of teachers' work, their capacity to reflect and assess achievements based on common goals, shared educational parameters, and criteria agreed by the professional community'.

In spite of it all, despite the gloomy scenario of performativity pressure, nowhere more compelling than in China, Qian and Walker end on a note of optimism. Like flying below the radar, it is by 'stealth' that change comes about, they suggest. They conclude that when we get to grips with the nature of reforms on a global scale, we are able to challenge the dominant mindset which has positioned testing at the centre of schools' agendas. Though being forced to confront the demands of reform, juxtaposed with alternative conceptualisations of what achievement means (the 'sollen' and the 'wollen), leadership for learning can move from back stage to centre stage. Concepts such as inquiry-based learning, integrated courses, creative thinking and holistic learning have entered the educational discourse, write Qian

and Walker, but they can only become real when there is a genuine and profound embrace of leadership for learning. Thinking and acting locally and globally.

Captured by the metaphor of the wedding cake in Chap. 1, leadership for learning returns us to where we first started but now knowing it differently. We see it anew through an epistemology in which the world is knowable through patterns of inter-dependence and reciprocity (Capra 2002). The ecological perspective draws our attention to the dynamic connections, relationships and mutual influences that impinge on, and shape learning and teaching. Understanding schools as living systems is not only pertinent for the 'big leaders' but equally for classroom teachers, write Mitchell and Sackney. We might add that the need for an understanding is also of paramount importance for those we teach because if students do not understand the social world of the school, how can they begin to comprehend the nature of community, society and the world in which their classroom and school experiences are nested?

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Introduction to Leadership for Learning

Chapter 1 Leadership and Learning: Paradox, Paradigms, and Principles, John MacBeath and Tony Townsend

This opening chapter explores the varied, and sometimes confused, interpretations of leadership for learning. As an introduction to this volume it tries of lay some of the groundwork for navigating this complex territory, drawing on international studies that bring differing understandings of 'learning,' 'leadership,' and their

interconnections. It suggests that there is important conceptual daylight between instructional leadership and leadership for learning, the key distinction to be found in the small but highly significant conjunction 'for.' It concludes with an elaboration of five principles developed in a seven-country study, suggesting that these may offer a scaffolding frame to bring to the wide-ranging discussions presented in the chapters contained in this book.

Part I: Major Themes in Leadership for Learning: An International Perspective

Chapter 2 U.S. Cultural History: Visible and Invisible Influences on Leadership for Learning, Ira Bogotch

Every nation has a unique cultural history. In the United States, political governance (e.g., public welfare) and economic power (e.g., property rights) have not only dominated educational reform discourses, but also have vied continuously to influence and reframe debates on leadership for learning. As such, the knowledge of U.S. cultural history should be important to educational leaders, most notably to provide school administrators with a cultural perspective for interpreting current practices and policies – and not see current educational reform(s) only within the narrow context of the present. The problem is that educators and researchers live and work in the present and, thus, have never had any educational experiences except what they know as educational reform policies and practices. Educators today have been unduly influenced by powerful economic forces, billionaire philanthropists, foundations, and ideological think tanks, rather than by the many on-the-ground local school leaders. This chapter asks, "What would past U.S. revolutionaries James Madison, Horace Mann, John Dewey, Elsie Clapp, and Alice Miel say about educational leadership and reforms today?"

Chapter 3 Leadership for Learning in Canada, Larry Sackney

There are six chapters from Canada in this publication covering a broad range of issues considered important in understanding the demands placed on those leading and teaching in our schools. The six topics addressed are linked starting with a discussion of leadership for learning as it is being influenced by research and practice in the Canadian context (Mitchell & Sackney, 2010). This is followed by the succession challenges confronting educational jurisdictions in finding leaders that can provide instructional leadership that enhances teaching and learning in schools (Fink, 2010). Subsequent chapters address the moral issues administrators face in dealing with diversity (Ryan, 2010), the lessons learned from improving leadership

on a large scale (Leithwood, Reid, Pedwell & Connor, 2010), the policy implications of building leadership capacity on a broad level (Pedwell, Levin, Pervin, Gallagher, Connor & Beck, 2010), and building internal and external accountability capacity through evidence-informed leadership at all system levels (Burger, Nadirova, Brandon, Garneau & Gonnet, 2010). This chapter summarizes Canadian contributions to policy, practice, and research on leadership for learning.

Chapter 4 Leadership Issues and Experiences in Latin America, Beatrice Avalos chapter is coming

The chapter sets the context in Latin America to which four specific chapters in the Handbook refer. Using data from the most recent regional evaluation of educational achievement, four types of countries are distinguished in terms of their learning results in the curricular areas measured. Results are linked to per capita income but also show an effect of schools and their conditions. Within this context, the main thrust of papers related to countries with high per capita income such as Chile and with low income such as the Dominican Republic in terms of school and teacher leadership is highlighted. The overall characteristics of the monitoring and supervisory roles of government (national and state) are the subject of a third paper centred on the need for appropriate mediations between state authority and school leadership, while the fourth paper is analyzed briefly in its presentation of the characteristics of school principles in the Latin American region.

Chapter 5 Transnational and Local Conditions and Expectations on School Leaders, Lejf Moos

The argument in this chapter is that school leaders need room to maneuver in order to be able to think and act as leaders for learning. Their latitude to maneuver is in many ways framed by the structures in which they strive to lead and by the external and internal expectations, both of the school and of school leadership.

The Danish educational system provides the background for analysing structures in contemporary Neo-Liberal Public Management (NLPM) with its decentralization of finance, administration, and influence in polycentric states. It lends itself to the analysis of dominant discourses and social technologies in NLPM. Some key features are a back-to-basis trend and a mix of decentralization and recentralization, employing both hard and soft governance. It is argued that many of the current social technologies and trends are evident at the transnational level as well. On the basis of a number of initiatives, it becomes apparent that there are developing isomorphic forms of influence.

A number of perspectives have been chosen to illustrate and discuss the broad and diverse range of expectations of school leaders. These include official

expectations from government and local authorities, from ideas advanced by the OECD, and from leadership theories. The chapter finishes with a presentation and discussion of findings from a successful international school principal research project, which examined how school leaders are able to maneuver their way through diverse and often conflicting expectations and mandates.

Chapter 6 Leadership for Learning in the United Kingdom, Jim O'Brien

This chapter reviews the chapters provided by the group of authors from the United Kingdom who contributed to this handbook. Further consideration of the issues that emerge is offered and the overall research findings are considered.

Chapter 7 Leadership and Learning: Making Connections Down Under, Neil Dempster

Five areas of research interest covered by authors contributing to the handbook from Australia and New Zealand are examined in this chapter. They cover political and policy environments and how they influence school leadership; the nature and extent of the professional preparation and development school leaders experience as they take up and fulfil their roles; the way in which leadership is shared and how those in positional authority are working with teachers to this end; strategies for the inclusion of parents and members of the wider community as leaders of children's learning, especially the learning of the disadvantaged and marginalised; and the leadership roles of students. Added to this is a discussion of emerging research that is focused on documenting the effects of combinations of leadership actions taken systematically by school principals to improve children's learning. The chapter concludes with a description of future research considered necessary in each of the five areas addressed.

Chapter 8 Leadership for Learning in the Middle East: The Road Travelled Thus Far, Thuwayba Al-Barwani

The chapter discusses issues raised by the World Bank Report (2008) and previous UNDP Arab Human Development Reports of 2002–2006 regarding the state of education in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. These flagship reports agreed on some basic issues that were considered to be important in the future development of education in the region. Among them are quality of teaching, learning and assessment, culture of learning, culture of quality, educational leadership,

and educational development and reform. The main question addressed in this chapter is as follows: How much progress has taken place in leadership for learning since these reports? Present efforts to address these issues by the MENA countries are analyzed and the work that remains to be done is identified. The chapter draws on the milestones as well as challenges presented in chapter contributions of prominent educators from Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, and Oman.

Part II: Theoretical and Contextual Frameworks for Leadership for Learning

Chapter 9 Researching Leadership: Toward a New Paradigm, Daniel Muijs

In this chapter, we present an analysis of recently published papers to explore what the dominant types of research in leadership currently are and to look at the underlying causal models and theories of action underpinning the methods and studies. A random sample of 500 articles from 6 educational leadership journals published between January 2005 and March 2010 was selected and classified by research method(s) and conceptual frameworks used. Results suggest that the predominant modes of research in the field are case study and survey research methods, and that the majority of papers posit direct effects or direct effects/antecedents models, with just under 30% positing mediated effects models and just under 16% reciprocal models. Implications of these findings for research in educational leadership are discussed.

Chapter 10 A Multifaceted Perspective on Leadership for Learning: A Case Study of Morocco, Abdelkader Ezzaki

This chapter develops the view that 'leadership for learning' is a multidimensional quality and a multilateral effort, which is not the monopoly of any given individual or group of individuals or segment of the education sector. It examines how different professional groups and specialized institutions take initiatives and seek to enhance the quality of student learning. The facets that are examined include (a) the public facet, which is represented by the social critics who shape opinions on needed change and the specialized national and international organizations that provide the foundations for education reform, (b) the policy facet, represented by the reform makers and implementers who are the strategic learning leaders, (c) the training and supervision facet, represented by teacher education institutions and the corps of pedagogical inspectors, whose 'leadership for learning' consists of both

maintaining the balance between change and protecting the status-quo, (d) the pedagogical facet, which comprises the curriculum and textbook designers and the mid-level implementers of learning-related change, (e) the school management facet, which pertains to the emerging roles of the school principals in promoting quality learning, and (f) the instructional facet, which is reserved to teachers as the frontline learning leaders. Beyond the layers of the official education system and the concern with students, 'leadership for learning' is also reflected in the effort made by education professionals for the sake of their own professional development. In the light of the discussion of the above facets, different generalizations are drawn about the nature of 'leadership for learning.'

Chapter 11 Leadership for Learning: Research Findings and Frontiers from Down Under, Neil Dempster, Greg Robson and Mike Gaffney

This chapter explores some of the connections being made between leadership and learning by Australian and New Zealand researchers. It does so by reviewing a sample of recent research in both countries to highlight emerging concepts and findings. These findings are illustrated in the description and examination of the Principals as Literacy Leaders [PALL] Pilot Project, an action research project funded by the Australian Government. A series of implications from this leadership-focused research agenda Down Under is directed at politicians, policy makers, school leaders, parents, the wider community, and researchers themselves. The drive in these calls to action is aimed at giving learning the ongoing prominence it needs if leaders are to remain focused on the moral purpose of the school's work. Finally, we conclude the chapter by highlighting leadership for learning research frontiers as questions to which research efforts should be directed in the future.

Chapter 12 A Developmental Framework for Instructional Leadership, Ulrich C. Reitzug and Deborah L. West

Instructional leadership has long been hailed as one of the most significant responsibilities of school principals. Although there has been much advocacy for principal instructional leadership, there has been far less explicit conceptualization of what instructional leadership encompasses. This chapter reports on interviews with 40 principals from 11 states in which the principals talk about their work in this era of high-stakes accountability. Specifically, in this chapter, we focus on their instructional leadership practice. Based on the analysis of the data, we propose a developmental framework of instructional leadership. We categorize instructional leadership

into direct and indirect forms, with direct forms including linear, organic, and prophetic instructional leadership, and indirect forms being relational, empowering, and political instructional leadership.

Part III: System and Policy Issues on Leadership for Learning

Chapter 13 Quality and Accountability: Policy Tensions for Australian School Leaders, Sue Thomas and Louise Watson

This chapter examines the changing relationship between national policy and educational leadership in Australian schools. It examines the fluid and contested policy environment that continues to shape school leadership with its increasingly insistent demands for higher levels of quality and accountability. The chapter analyzes the discourses on quality that have underpinned the Australian policy field during the last decade and examines how these discourses informed struggles over the control of an emerging national framework of professional standards for school leaders. The analysis illustrates how complex, multiple, and sometimes contradictory discourses have shaped and constrained the professional practices of school leaders. It suggests that policies for quality and accountability create tensions between leading for quality and accountability and leading for learning. The chapter concludes with a call for school leaders to become more literate about the policy process in order to negotiate these tensions and thus provide a bridge between leadership for quality and accountability and leadership for learning.

Chapter 14 Leadership for Learning in China: The Political and Policy Context, Qian Haiyan and Allan Walker

This chapter aims to map the political and policy context that shapes how school leaders lead for student learning in Mainland China. Over the last decade the central government in China has moved to deemphasize the all-consuming 'High Exam' focus; the Exam tends to equate student learning with excellent results on standardized examinations. Despite clearly articulated reform intentions, school principals in China find themselves in 'messy' situations as they try to translate these intentions into the reality of their schools. There is tremendous pressure on principals from all directions to produce outstanding student exam performance. Based on a study conducted in Shanghai with a group of senior secondary school principals, the chapter argues that a considerable gap exists between policy intent and policy effect. Principals' work lives are fraught with tension as they attempt to address the demands the reforms impose on what and how students should learn.

The chapter concludes with some of the implications for Chinese leaders that accompany these tensions.

Chapter 15 Transforming Singapore Schools: The Economic Imperative, Government Policy, and School Principalship, Clive Dimmock and Jonathan Goh

This chapter argues that the command and control system operated by the Singapore Ministry of Education (MOE)—far from being a conservative block to reform and change that might normally be associated with a centralized bureaucracy—has in fact been the main change agent instigating and promulgating it since Singapore's independence in 1965. The profundity of the reforms and their acceleration in the last 15 years show them to be generally carefully planned, coherent, and well articulated in contrast to those of many Western governments during the same period. Given the politico-economic and social conditions of Singapore, and the fact that there has been only one ruling Political Party since the nation's foundation, the government has been able to orchestrate and align changes in the education system to support and reinforce evolving economic policies and priorities. By orchestrating the political, economic, and social condition of Singapore during this time, the government has effectively determined the role, functions, and contribution of principals as school leaders. The MOE ensures that Principals as senior educational officers have clear expectations on them to implement policy in their schools. Notwithstanding centralized control, two caveats to this thesis are as follows: first, the extent to which principals and schools implement policy is variable, and second, the MOE is increasingly and cautiously encouraging more school-based leadership initiatives. This chapter traces the evolution of the principal's role over the past 50 years, provides examples of innovative curricular innovations in Singapore schools, and hints at future directions for the principalship.

Chapter 16 Internal and External Accountability: Building Evidence-Informed Leadership Capacity at All System Levels, John Burger, Anna Nadirova, Jim Brandon, Bob Garneau and Chris Gonnet

This chapter considers leadership standards at the district and school levels in relationship to advantageous systemic data analytic structures and processes facilitated by a provincial department of education. Evidence-informed decision-making is explicated within a multifaceted, adaptive leadership framework that is evolving in the province of Alberta, Canada. The key foundational aspects of this leadership framework are as follows: (1) attaining a comprehensive approach to student assessment; (2) monitoring and understanding students' progress controlling for

various educational, cultural, and social settings and conditions; (3) supporting deeper analysis of at-risk students' achievement; and (4) encouraging evidence-informed leadership, programming, and decision-making at school, district, and province/state levels. We consider some of the challenges and benefits of building system-wide and local leadership structures grounded in holistic and systematically collected empirical, data-based evidence.

Chapter 17 Developing Leaders, Building Networks, and Changing Schools Through System Leadership, Wilfried Schley and Michael Schratz

Steps toward systemic innovation require a new understanding of professionalizing leaders on all levels of the school system. We need "system thinkers in action" (Fullan, 2005) who interact with larger parts of the system both horizontally and vertically in order to bring about deeper reform. Their collective wisdom in thinking and acting shapes future steps in national school reform.

Three Austrian national development initiatives are presented, which work together toward leadership for learning:

- The *Leadership Academy* creates a learning context aimed at influencing the pattern of how professionals in leading positions think and go about change.
- The *New Middle School*, a reform project fostering as well as challenging all children, irrespective of their social, cultural, and language background or their individual performance, is driven by the emphatic policy goal of raising academic achievement. This requires a fundamental reorientation of the instructional and organizational system of teaching and learning for 10–14 year olds in heterogeneous groups.
- The third initiative, *Hierarchy Meets Network*, brings the Minister of Education into dialogue with innovative actors across Austria and removes structural barriers to fostering networking and cooperative activities among innovators.

Chapter 18 School Leadership in Chile: Breaking the Inertia, José Weinstein, Gonzalo Muñoz and Dagmar Raczynski

Chile's school leadership is in the midst of a difficult transition in which principals must face new demands and implement innovative practices even though they lack the legal powers and training to do so properly. The search for school leadership is part of a more far-reaching push for decentralization and greater accountability of schools that would grant principals a more central role. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the tensions of this developing movement in regard to the principals' position, actual leadership practices, and existing opportunities for training. The

text also offers suggestions for educational policy that could favor the proper channeling of this transformative force. The content of the chapter is based on available statistics and intensive use of the results of a national research project that its authors are directing. Given the singular importance of the private sector in education in Chile—enrollment in private and private subsidized schools is higher than that of public schools—special attention is paid to the implications of these institutional management conditions for the exercise of leadership.

Chapter 19 School Leadership in the United Kingdom: A Policy Perspective, Jim O'Brien

This chapter considers the developments in policy associated with school leadership in the United Kingdom over the past two decades. This period has witnessed significant devolution within the United Kingdom with Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland gaining significant powers especially in relation to their 'distinct' educational systems. The major influences on policy are outlined, while a number of initiatives such as forms of professional development for school leaders are discussed.

Part IV: Educating School Leaders for Leadership for Learning

Chapter 20 Lessons About Improving Leadership on a Large Scale: From Ontario's Leadership Strategy, Kenneth Leithwood, Steven Reid, Laurie Pedwell, and Marg Connor

This chapter identifies lessons from a major effort by the Ontario government to improve school and district leadership as one means of enhancing student achievement in the province. Guided by the Leadership Development Branch of the Ministry of Education, this effort so far consists of some 15 aligned but distinct initiatives. Most of these initiatives have been built on relevant existing evidence and have been the object of their own evaluations. Evidence from these evaluations is analyzed for lessons useful to others for developing leadership on a large scale. Eight lessons are described along with the evidence justifying them.

Chapter 21 Leadership for Learning: Educating Educational Leaders, Christine Forde

The role of school headteachers/principals has evolved significantly, particularly as the demand for high-performing schools has become a political imperative

globally and so the question of how educational leaders should be educated is a central concern. However, this question of the development of educational leaders is contentious because the nature of professional learning is itself complex, particularly the relationship between leadership development and practice in schools. This chapter examines one specific area of leadership development, that of headship preparation. There is, as Davies et al. (2005) argue, only limited evidence about how to prepare and develop school leadership or headship and the role and scope of educational leadership continues to evolve. The chapter considers how this relationship between leadership and learning (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009) might best be forged in headship/principalship preparation programs. Approaches to leadership development can be characterized as three broad models: apprenticeship models, knowledge-based programs, and experiential learning programs. This chapter begins by examining critically a number of different approaches to the development of leadership in education. Then the chapter sets one educational system—that of Scotland, United Kingdom—as a case study and draws from a number of recent research and development projects on headship preparation. In this final section, the discussion focuses on the tension between individual transformation and institutional transformation and the construction and place of knowledge in the preparation of headteachers/principals.

Chapter 22 Leadership Learning that Makes a Difference in Schools: Pushing the Frontier at the University of Maine, Richard H. Ackerman, Gordon A. Donaldson, Sarah V. Mackenzie, George F. Marnik

This chapter describes the model of leadership knowledge and the approach to leadership development employed in the University of Maine's graduate program in Educational Leadership. The model and learning framework described here emerged from the Educational Leadership Area Faculty's developmental work over the past 15 years with a broad array of educators in Maine and beyond. The model has been through many refinements as faculty have used it to shape learning experiences and their own andragogical roles in the service of leadership development. The program follows a model of leadership development based on three complementary dimensions of leadership knowledge: cognitive, ideas and research about the "technology" of schooling; interpersonal, the relationships and human dynamics of leadership; and intrapersonal, the "internal" dynamics of the leader's philosophical and personal world. Leader learning generates the capacity to self-manage (intrapersonal) and to form productive relationships (interpersonal) so that people are mobilized to action that benefits student learning (cognitive). The chapter describes the model of leadership knowledge and shares some of the learning methods faculty have developed to match the particularities

of the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge bases that make up leadership performance.

Chapter 23 Educating Leaders for Learning in Schools in Kenya: The Need for a Reconceptualization, Julius O. Jwan and Charles O. Ong'ondo

In this chapter, we discuss the education of school leaders in Kenya in relation to the learning needs in Kenyan schools. In the first section, we review contemporary conceptualizations of school leadership and learning and how these link into perspectives on leadership for learning. We highlight the recognition in current literature that educating school leaders is a necessary endeavor—leadership skills cannot be left to chance. That is, teaching qualifications and experience alone are not sufficient for school leadership—which requires additional sets of skills to those essential for classroom teachers. We also highlight the current views that consider learning as a sociocultural endeavor that ought to involve more than mastering chunks of facts and sets of behaviors or skills as it has been previously perceived. We also discuss the recognition that educating school leaders ought to link both managerial skills and instructional skills (learning promotion roles), which in turn may enhance the achievement of the necessary goals of educating leaders for learning. The second section of the chapter looks at the context—paying attention to both policy and practice based on a study (Jwan, 2009) that focused on perceptions of democratic school leadership in Kenya. We highlight that, in Kenya, there is no specialized training for school leaders. They are selected based on experience in the field as teachers. We end the chapter by outlining what we feel needs to be reconceptualized with regard to leadership for learning in schools in Kenya.

Chapter 24 Leadership for Learning in Malaysian Schools, Tie Fatt Hee

This chapter examines the role of school leaders in promoting a learning environment and the capacity building of school leaders in Malaysia. Leadership, in the context of Malaysian schools, tends to rest exclusively on the shoulders of the school principal. Although school principals recognize the need to promote ongoing learning to enable students to face the challenges of rapid change, there is tremendous pressure to ensure that students perform well in the examination-oriented education system. It is further aggravated with the pressure to ensure that schools comply with the ongoing education reforms. The chapter also discusses the Ministry of Education's efforts in developing future school leaders and the national development policies aimed at enhancing the ethos and culture of student learning in the Malaysian context.

Chapter 25 Developing School Principals in South Africa, Inbanathan Naicker

Developing the leadership and management capacities of school principals in South Africa is seen as an important ingredient in improving school quality. This chapter looks at two initiatives aimed at professionally developing school principals. One initiative is the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) and the other is the Principals Management Development Programme (PMDP). A brief background on school principalship including the minimum qualifications and experience required to be appointed to the post of school principal in South Africa is presented, followed by some initiatives in the training and development of school principals. Accounts on the genesis, aims, and roll-out of both the ACE: SL and PMDP are then presented. An examination of the content of the programs and methods and approaches employed in the development of school principals is presented. An evaluation of both the programs brings this chapter to conclusion.

Chapter 26 Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Zimbabwe, Chrispen Chiome

This chapter seeks to describe the historical context of the Zimbabwe Education system and identifies four programs that were used to provide school leaders in Zimbabwe with the necessary tools and training to successfully ensure quality in educational provision. It will examine the lessons learnt from the Zimbabwe experience and identify the challenges met in training school heads in Zimbabwe, especially as it applies to developing opportunities for leadership for learning.

Part V: Implementing Leadership for Learning: The Role of the School Leader

Chapter 27 Collaborative Leadership and School Improvement: Understanding the Impact on School Capacity and Student Learning, Phil Hallinger and Ronald Heck

Fifty years of theory and research offer increasing levels of support for the assertion that principal leadership makes a difference in the quality of schooling, school development, and student learning. In the current context of global education reform, however, recent inquiries have focused on identifying how teams of school leaders contribute to school improvement and student learning. This chapter reports on findings drawn from a series of empirical analyses that assessed the effects of

collaborative leadership on school improvement capacity and student learning in a large sample of primary schools in the state of Hawaii over a 4-year period. Our findings support the prevailing view that collaborative school leadership can positively affect student learning in reading and math through building the school's capacity for academic improvement. The research further extends this finding, however, by offering empirical support for a more refined conception that casts leadership for student learning as a process of mutual influence in which school capacity both shapes and is shaped by the school's collective leadership.

Chapter 28 Culturally Relevant Leadership for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools, Carlos R. McCray and Floyd D. Beachum

The issues and struggles facing school principals today seem daunting, especially for urban school principals. Educational leaders in the United States encounter serious challenges, much like their counterparts in other nations as they struggle to deal with greater external problems like overcrowding, grinding poverty, and problematic politics that impede the mission of their schools. We proffer in this chapter that a commitment to educational equity and excellence cannot occur without principals acknowledging and understanding the importance of culturally relevant leadership. Culturally relevant leadership involves a school leader (1) understanding the importance of diversity and the recognition of different social identities (race, class, gender, ability status, religious orientation, etc.) (Harro, 2000) and (2) utilizing such knowledge in every practice conflating this with notions of cultural collision and collusion (Beachum & McCray, 2008), while also (3) constantly reflecting on these practices for continuous improvement and enhancement.

Chapter 29 Expanding Learning-Focused Leadership in U.S. Urban Schools, Bradley S. Portin and Michael S. Knapp

This chapter describes the results of an intensive, qualitative study of U.S. urban school leaders' work, in 15 schools across four states. The study examined leaders with supervisory authority (principals, assistant principals, department heads) and their nonsupervisory counterparts (teacher leaders) who were engaged in individual and collective efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. The schools in this study were finding ways to support progress among a diverse student clientele, share the leadership work among various staff members, and align resources with a shared agenda for improving learning across the school. This chapter suggests lessons and provides images of possibility for schools and for those who support the work of educators in schools, concerning the ways that

leadership can be focused on the learning of students, staff, and the entire school community. The study findings suggest several ways of thinking about and exercising learning-focused leadership in these schools that may help to explain why they are doing well and how others could do so. In particular, the chapter portrays (1) what it means for leaders to work within a demanding environment, (2) what supervisory and nonsupervisory leaders do in these kinds of settings, and (3) what their work implies for the new learning they will need to do.

Chapter 30 Nordic Superintendents' Leadership Roles: Cross-National Comparisons, Olof Johansson, Lejf Moos, Elisabet Nihlfors, Jan Paulssen and Mik Risku

Our research problem deals with what happens when national educational policies meet structures of implementation at the school district and school level. Our focus is on the position that is directly subordinate to a municipal committee or board and with responsibility for education. We refer to this position as superintendent. By focusing on this position and the prerequisites for the person holding that position, it may also be possible to investigate some of the preconditions for learning. The chapter starts with a short description of the Nordic governance system, gives some results from earlier studies about the superintendent, and is followed by findings from our Nordic survey.

The findings address the power distribution between the state and the municipalities in national school governance across Nordic countries. The underlying argument posits that these system characteristics are crucial in determining the context for municipal superintendent leadership in practice. The conceptual model of the Nordic superintendent is discussed in the light of empirical data from all Nordic countries. Finally, the chapter discusses to what extent leadership for learning is a relevant perspective for analyzing Nordic superintendent leadership as it emerged from the data.

Chapter 31 Successful Leadership for Improved Student Learning in High Need Schools: U.S. Perspectives from the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP) Stephen Jacobson and Lauri Johnson

Based on findings from the ISSPP, we examine three elements of successful school leadership: (1) improving student performance in high need schools, (2) building organizational capacity to sustain school success over time, and (3) developing leadership that is culturally responsive. Placing these issues in context, we describe the governance and funding foundations of the U.S. system and the demographics of the

increasingly diverse U.S. student population. Next we offer an overview of the ISSPP and how it has contributed to the literature on leadership for improved student performance, with particular emphasis on improving the performance of high need schools, building organizational capacity to sustain success over time, and developing leadership that is culturally responsive. We conclude with directions for future research and the significance of site-specific and comparative analyses.

Chapter 32 Improving and Supporting Principals' Leadership in Latin America, Denise Vaillant

Schools are considered to be "nested learning communities" and their principals are responsible for establishing a culture of learning in the school. But in many Latin American schools, the role of the principal is framed in purely administrative and management terms, and the principal is not expected to provide educational leadership. The leadership that principals could provide in improving teaching represents an enormous potential resource that is now being wasted. Effective school leadership, like effective teaching, is not an ineffable, inborn trait; rather, it involves a set of skills and competencies that can be learned.

Part VI: Changing Hearts and Minds: Building Leadership for Learning in Current School Leaders

Chapter 33 The Succession Challenge: Warm Bodies or Leaders of Learning? Dean Fink

International discussions of leadership succession in education seem to consider it to be strictly a problem of mathematical misalignment —too many jobs and not enough people to fill them. In reality, there is no problem if policy makers are only interested in filling jobs with 'warm bodies' who think they can manage a school. If, however, they expect leaders of schools and districts to be leaders of learning, then a very serious and pervasive succession challenge exists internationally. This chapter, which is based on research in three diverse school jurisdictions in each of three countries, suggests that a succession challenge has more to do with politics and educational philosophy than with issues of supply and demand. It has more to do with increasing pressure placed on school and other educational leaders as a result of innovation overload and change-related chaos and the unwillingness of many educators, especially younger potential aspirants, to conform to policies developed by older generations that they view as inconsistent with their values, goals and life styles, and the pressure to support activities that they believe have more to do with good politics than good education. By examining the philosophical,

political, generational, and geographical origins of the succession challenge, this chapter suggests that if educational policy makers aspire to recruit the most able leaders of learning, they must look beyond merely exploiting the leadership pipeline with 'warm bodies' to filling well-financed pools of well-prepared leaders, and instead of pools, creating reservoirs of leadership potential that foster the leadership capacity that is inherent in all organizations.

Chapter 34 Building Leadership Capacity Across 5000 Schools, Laurie Pedwell, Ben Levin, Barry Pervin, Mary Jean Gallagher, Marg Connor and Helen Beck

This chapter describes a systematic leadership development strategy used over several years in the Province of Ontario, Canada, outlining the strategy, the way it developed, and the various barriers and constraints on leadership development at a system level. The chapter focuses on the context, development, and components of the Ontario Leadership Strategy, which aims to attract the right people to leadership roles and to support them once in the role. It shows how the leadership strategy is a supporting condition for the achievement of Ontario's overall education strategy.

Chapter 35 Building Leadership Capacity: The Norwegian Approach, Jorunn Møller and Eli Ottesen

This article analyzes how leadership development and preparation are conceptualized and contextualized in the national education program for newly appointed school principals in Norway. Our main focus is on exploring whether there are differing epistemological foundations of various approaches to learning-centred school leadership. Our theoretical framework is informed by a review of a variety of studies, which focus on the relationship between leadership and student learning, and by Michael Fullan's (2001) framework for thinking about and leading complex change. As empirical basis, we have selected and compared two different preparatory programs.

While both programs have been granted a status as a national leadership program in Norway, they also demonstrate a variation in understanding leadership for school improvement and student learning. The findings also demonstrate some significant differences across providers with regard to perspective and the emphasis on outcomes and question the extent to which the knowledge base is characterized by a combination of educational theories and research on leadership. Despite these distinctions, which are anchored in different epistemological foundations, both programs are assumed to contribute to the implementation of a national policy for

leadership development and training in Norway. Our main argument is that to understand how this is possible, it is important to trace historical and cultural patterns of social development within the Norwegian context.

Chapter 36 Leadership for Learning—Learning for Leadership: The Impact of Professional Development, Stephan Gerhard Huber

There seems to be a broad international agreement about the need for school leaders to have the capacities required to improve in their schools the teaching of teachers for the learning of pupils. Hence, school leaders need to have a profound knowledge of learning. In this respect, (continuous) professional development (PD), of a formal and an informal kind, plays an important part in the professionalization of school leaders and teachers as professionals. In this chapter, international trends and recommendations for PD will be presented. These have been derived from results of an international comparative study of the PD landscape for educational leadership personnel in 15 countries, as well as from expert meetings on international conferences covering leadership training and development. Extensive literature reviews confirm the development of PD over the last few decades. Recently, in the professional development of school leaders, 'course formats' in PD are not any longer exclusively the focus of attention, but other formats and approaches have been developed. Hence, the use of multiple learning approaches and of different modes and types of learning in PD will be described. The central question of all PD is that of its impact. What influences effectiveness? How can effectiveness be provided and made visible? A framework for empirical research and evaluation according to theoretical principles is introduced that can be used to formulate a theoretical framework for conducting research, for evaluation, for practice, and for use at the school level (in particular for school leadership), in order to provide an overview of various important aspects.

Chapter 37 The Development of Leadership Capability in a Self-Managing School System: The New Zealand Experience and Challenges, Cathy Wylie

Developing a leadership for learning capability throughout a system, where schools exercise considerable autonomy, challenges policymakers to work with principals and researchers to develop coherent approaches. This chapter outlines the shift in New Zealand from a focus on the principal as the school chief executive to a current focus on the principal's pivotal role in leadership of the ways teachers work together to improve student learning. Instrumental in this shift has been the development of a leadership framework that is owned by principals as well as

policymakers, underpinned by a best evidence synthesis of the relationship of school leadership and student outcomes. This work has also led to a powerful new tool for schools to use in reviewing their school leadership, as well as informing policymakers about the overall school leadership capability in New Zealand. These developments hold considerable promise, so long as the policy emphasis on capability and joint work can be maintained and supported rather than undermined by changes in school accountability.

Chapter 38 Providing Professional Sustenance for Leaders of Learning: The Glass Half Full? Simon Clarke and Helen Wildy

This chapter is based on the key assumption that school leadership has considerable potential to influence student learning. It follows, therefore, that the efficacy of the leadership for learning agenda will be determined to a large extent by the ways in which principals are prepared, developed, and supported in their roles. Accordingly, this chapter first examines aspects of the current education policy environment that offer hope for the advancement of leadership for learning in Australia's schools. It then outlines customary arrangements for leadership development before describing some more promising recent initiatives, which acknowledge the need for principals to be powerful leaders of learning as well as powerful learners themselves. The chapter concludes by identifying some conditions that are most suitable for developing school leaders' agency in asserting a leadership for learning agenda in the nation's schools.

Chapter 39 Leadership for Effective School Improvement: Support for Schools and Teachers' Professional Development in the Latin American Region, Inés Aguerrondo and Lea Vezub

After the expansion of basic education occurred in most Latin American countries during the second half of the twentieth century, currently the education systems in the region face new challenges. These mainly relate to improving the quality of student learning and performance of schools, the possibility of offering education that is of interest and relevance to children and adolescents, the support of educational innovations, culture change and continuous improvement of teachers. This chapter presents the status of the issue focusing on recent debates on two key processes to transform schools and ensure quality education to all citizens. These are inspection systems for schools and devices for pedagogic support and school-centred professional development. With the aim of contributing to the debate, this work offers a review of the origins and evolution of these processes, along with a discussion of policies and experiences in the countries of Latin America.

Part VII: Spreading the Task: Including Others in Leadership for Learning

Chapter 40 Leadership for Learning: What It Means for Teachers, Susan Lovett and Dorothy Andrews

In this chapter, we highlight the critical connection of teacher leadership with improved pedagogy and quality learning. Illustrations from Australian and New Zealand case studies are used to reveal a variety of ways in which teachers can create opportunities and structures to support professional talk centred on observation of one another's teaching, shared reflections, and planning of next steps. Traditional notions of leader and leadership are presented to show how they no longer serve schools well. Instead we emphasize the need to foster communities of teacher leaders who can inspire those around them to make a difference in the lives of their students. In attempting to clarify what we mean by teacher leadership, we argue that new forms of leadership are now needed that value professional learning not as the transmission of knowledge from experts but as a discovery and co-construction of knowledge that teachers develop alongside one another as learners and operate within a professional learning community. We argue that investing in teachers as learning leaders needs to be intentional so that promising teachers are supported in their professional learning and see leadership with and alongside their colleagues as attractive and satisfying options.

Chapter 41 Instructional Supervision, Coherence, and Job-Embedded Learning, Sally J. Zepeda

Given the importance of teachers to student and school success, teacher learning should be at the core of school leaders' work. To foster teacher growth and development, principals have to coherently link supervision, professional development, teacher evaluation, and other practices (e.g., peer coaching, mentorship, portfolio development, and action research) to meet the needs of adult learners. To be effective, these practices should be combined into a comprehensive, job-embedded support program for teachers.

Although they all target teacher growth and development, instructional supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development serve different purposes. Formative in nature and concerned with ongoing, developmental, and differentiated approaches, instructional supervision aims to promote growth, development, interaction, and fault-free problem solving by allowing teachers to examine their own classroom practices with and through the assistance of others. At the other end of the spectrum is teacher evaluation, a summative process more concerned with teacher ranking and assessment. Due to these differences in

intents and purposes, instructional supervision and teacher evaluation are often in conflict, but should be bridged to bring coherence to teacher learning and development efforts. Effective and purposeful professional development is ongoing and long term and weaves together the supervisory cycles and other developmental opportunities through job-embedded learning. Coupled with instructional supervision and teacher evaluation, professional development coherently connects these processes through the practices embedded in the everyday work of teachers.

Chapter 42 School Leadership for Adult Development: The Dramatic Difference It Can Make, Ellie Drago-Severson

Educators at every level go through different stages of development over the course of their lives and need different kinds of supports and challenges to grow. This chapter introduces a new model of *Learning-oriented Leadership,* in support to adult development that can help school and district leaders consciously cultivate teacher, principal, and superintendents' internal capacities to meet the enormous challenges faced in the educational workplace. The model grew out of longitudinal mixed-methods research (Drago-Severson, 1994, 1996, 2004a, 2004b, 2009). It is based on the works of Robert Kegan (1982, 1994, 2000) and constructive-developmental theory. The chapter shows school leaders can create the conditions and employ practices that foster growth and learning for individuals with different needs and developmental orientations.

Chapter 43 Leaders of Learning: Accomplished Teachers as Teacher Leaders, Margery McMahon

Teacher leadership has gained currency in the discourse and practice of leadership in schools, aligning with and a product of more distributive and less hierarchical understanding of and approaches to leadership. This is manifest in schools in a variety of forms and in ways that are more democratic, consultative, and participative. This chapter explores the evolution of teacher leadership in the United Kingdom, considering how new models of accomplished teaching such as Advanced Skills Teachers and Excellent Teachers in England and Wales and Chartered Teachers in Scotland and Wales represent new forms of teacher leadership, which may challenge more traditional structures and ideologies in school. Drawing on critical policy analysis (Forde, 2009) and empirical research (Reeves, McMahon et al., 2010; McMahon & Reeves et al.*,* 2008; Connelly & McMahon, 2007), the chapter will outline the ways in which these models of accomplished teaching converge with and diverge from theoretical and applied

models of teacher leadership and argue that structural and ideological barriers in the education systems of the United Kingdom mean that these models of teacher leadership are not fully accommodated nor their expertise fully capitalized and utilized. In considering the work of accomplished teachers in curriculum innovation, developing pedagogy, and supporting co-practitioners, the chapter concludes by looking at the ways in which accomplished teaching extends, elides with, and challenges existing understandings of teacher leadership.

Chapter 44 Ensuring Staff Development Impacts on Learning, Sara Bubb and Peter Earley

This chapter draws on recent research to explore staff development and its impact on students. Emphasis is also given to how time is used for staff development. Recent research has found that development time is often underused by schools, so staff development leaders need to ensure that this time is used well for staff learning and that it impacts positively student outcomes. The evaluation of staff development, if undertaken in a systematic way, can lead to improved outcomes for both students and staff, but a key obstacle to a better appreciation of the impact of staff development lies in the way that it is conventionally conceived: in terms of inputs and not as the changes effected in individuals' thinking and practice. There is little reference to outcomes—what will happen as a result of development activity. The authors develop Guskey's (2000) model of professional development to consider different levels of impact, including the learning and experience of students.

Chapter 45 Realities and Perspectives Arising from Professional Development to Improve the Teaching of Reading and Writing: The CETT Project in the Dominican Republic, Liliana Montenegro

This paper describes the theoretical bases upon which the work of the Center for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT), as part of a regional effort in three regions of Latin America, was founded. It also describes the efforts carried out to prepare teacher leadership in teaching of reading and writing, centered on communicative and textual development of language capacities.

The article also provides data on educational progress in Central America as a context for understanding the condition of children's literacy in the Dominican Republic and a description of the model for professional development and materials, refined though feedback provided by the participating teachers, school principal, and facilitators. It describes also how 3,400 teachers from first through fourth

grade put into practice that model in the Dominican Republic, impacting a population of approximately 125,000 boys and girls.

Chapter 46 Leadership for Learning: Student Perspectives, James Skinner, Alf Lizzio and Neil Dempster

This chapter provides a grounded understanding of the meanings attached to leadership by adolescents and its association with learning. It draws on Australian research undertaken with adolescents in schools and sporting clubs as examples of organized settings in which young people gather and learn. Organizations such as these are traditionally structured in hierarchical ways affording young people the opportunity to experience leadership as it is defined by adults as well as leadership as it is experienced amongst peers spontaneously in playgrounds and sporting arenas. It is suggested that defining leadership from an adolescent perspective will help reconceptualize approaches to youth leadership experience and learning for civic engagement. It suggests that a broader view of leadership and its capacity to enhance learning and foster a higher level of civic engagement within the school and the wider community is a focus researchers must embrace in the future.

Chapter 47 Promoting Students Learning Through Sustainable Innovations: Where Is the Missing Link? Thuwayba Al-Barwani and Mohamed Osman

Educators and policy makers around the world have endorsed various approaches to student empowerment such as the use of active learning, student-centered pedagogies, and related emerging technologies. However, most of the education innovations appear to have a short life span, and are driven to a large extent by paradigm shifts in other disciplines such as psychology, management, and information technology. In addition, research on the effectiveness and utility of education innovations is often conducted in a form of cross-comparison between innovations rather than looking at attributes of a given innovation. The purpose of this chapter is to systemically analyze some innovative projects and policy developments that promote student learning in the Sultanate of Oman. The chapter will address some questions and issues related to the sustainability of education innovations that promote student learning. More specifically, the chapter will highlight the innovation cycle and its ability to promote an inclusive culture and enhance capacities of all involved and concerned stakeholders. The chapter will also investigate a wide range of actions that can be taken to ensure the sustainability of these innovations. A theoretical framework (the "Innovation Sustainability Wheel") will be used as a tool to determine the missing links that may impact the sustainability of the selected innovations.

Chapter 48 Creating Participative Learning Cultures Through Student Leadership, David Frost

This chapter focuses on the links between school leadership, teacher leadership, and student leadership. Drawing on the literature on distributed leadership, pupil voice, and participation, it examines key conceptual problems such as the tension between the desire to enhance human agency for students and teachers and the reality of compulsory schooling and hierarchical systems of accountability. The chapter draws on material arising from two research and evaluation projects, the 'Influence and Participation of Young People in their Learning' (IPiL) project and the 'Evaluation of the Learning to Lead Initiative' (ELLI), to discuss the strategies that schools can use to enable students of all ages to exercise leadership and become full partners in the enterprise of learning. The leadership challenges faced in developing participative cultures are examined.

Part VIII: From People Learning to Organizational Learning: Building Capacity

Chapter 49 Schools as Organizational Connectors and Reproducers of the Hierarchy of Learning Success, Fenwick English

This chapter describes a 30-year history of utilizing the curriculum management audit in the United States to improve pupil learning. The audit is based on notions of machine bureaucracy and is the epitome of organizational rationality and control. The audit standards and indicators are outlined along with the paradoxes of application, that is, improved means of internal control required to improve pupil learning as evidenced on mass-administered tests more tightly circumscribes teacher autonomy and is the source of teacher resistance to pupil learning as measured by those tests. The second paradox is that teacher flexibility in adapting the curriculum is a requirement to maximize student learning; and while the curriculum content must by "tight," its pacing, sequencing, and classroom reinforcement must remain highly localized, or "loose." This is the "paradox of administration," a concept as old as the audit itself in organizational theory. The work of Basil Bernstein in the United Kingdom is referenced as a different way of auditing an educational program with a different set of questions. However, such questions would bring into focus the power of the political elites who now exercise control of schooling and are not likely to be viewed favorably by them since it would expose their stake in preserving current sociopolitical-economic inequalities.

Chapter 50 Leading School-Based Networks and Collaborative Learning: Working Together for Better Outcomes? Mark Hadfield and Christopher Chapman

School-to-school networks have become integral features of many education systems. Some networks have emerged organically as practitioners have sought to share and improve practice while others have been systematically planned and supported by policy makers in an attempt to raise the overall effectiveness of entire systems. However, despite their rising popularity, the literature pertaining to their leadership remains limited. This chapter is based on the view that many school-to-school networks share common features and face similar issues, and therefore, their leadership is presented with comparable sets of tasks and challenges. The chapter discusses these key leadership activities and concludes by setting out a framework for network leadership.

Chapter 51 Principals Think Organization: Dilemmas in the Management of Today's Education, Peter Henrik Raae

This article demonstrates how a range of transnational trends is brought together in a complex discourse of modernization. It calls attention to a complexity consisting of not only competing but also conflicting forms of reasoning about school and the school's task. This presents schools' management with tasks that increasingly seem to involve deciding how best to create those frameworks and limits around school as an institution and organization that are best able to ensure the school's integrity and allow space for its core activities, namely, good teaching. Taking as its starting point in a concrete case—the implementation of a comprehensive national school reform—the article describes how principals attempt to cope with this new ambiguity by setting up a variety of notions about and models for organization. The article claims that principals face increasing challenges to their ability to create structurally supported holistic conceptualizations, defending the school against the fragmenting pressure coming from the world outside.

Chapter 52 The Self-Organizing School Theory: Leading Change for Learning, Alan Bain

This chapter provides a set of theoretically derived principles for school reform that can be employed by school leaders to guide their engagement with school improvement and change processes. The principles are empirically derived from theories of self-organization and complexity and tested over a 12-year

period in a longitudinal school reform project. They show the way in which theory can provide a practical design metaphor for understanding and enacting change in schools.

Chapter 53 Building and Leading Within Learning Ecologies, Coral Mitchell and Larry Sackney

The chapter utilizes an ecological perspective to draw attention to the dynamic connections, relationships, and mutual influences that impinge on teaching and learning and the consequential implications for school leaders. Presented are concepts and strategies that equip leaders to conceptualize learning systems from an ecological perspective, to examine the mutual influences and interconnections among various aspects of school life, and to frame and reframe conditions for enhancing teaching and learning. Concepts and strategies are organized around four domains of conditions: cognitive, affective, cultural, and structural. The premise is that reciprocal relationships exist among the domains and that the learning ecology emerges when the domains are constructed and led in ways that enable people to make meaningful collective and individual responses to the compelling disturbances that arise in schools.

Constructing the four domains from an ecological perspective requires leaders to pay attention to the processes and patterns of living systems. It challenges leaders to think about holistic patterns of activity and mutual influences within the school. The connections among cognition, affect, culture, and structure indicate that the character of the relationships shapes how people teach or learn. For leaders, the task is to discover the meanings and purposes that underlie specific actions so that they can move beyond judgments about unacceptable or confusing actions and thereby lead to joyful teaching and learning experiences for everyone.

Chapter 54 Leaders Who Build and Sustain Passion for Learning: Capacity Building in Practice, Qing Gu

The purpose of this chapter is to show how a Chinese school principal progressively and continuously creates conditions for the learning and development of her staff and through this has built and enhanced the capacity at individual, collective, and community levels for successful and sustained school improvement. The empirical evidence is based upon the 5-year development of her school. What we learn from her story is that she makes context-sensitive judgments about the combination, sequencing, and timing of her leadership strategies and distributes leadership progressively through different school development phases. This demonstrates striking similarities to findings of other international

studies on successful schools and principals that are present, regardless of the differences in the cultural, societal, political, and socioeconomic contexts of the schools led by this Chinese principal and her western colleagues. This observation suggests that while it is important to understand the differences in institutional arrangements across different cultures and countries (Hofstede, 1996), it is equally important that we do not lose sight of the passion, aspirations, and leadership qualities and strategies shared by many successful leaders nationally and internationally.

Chapter 55 Creating a Learning Culture in Schools: An Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities with Special Reference to the Egyptian Context, Atta Taha Zidan

This paper explores the nature of the two key concepts in the educational enterprise, namely, 'learning' and 'teaching,' in relation to one another and to total quality education. An attempt is made to analyze current realities of the educational setting in Egyptian education and other similar teaching–learning contexts around the world. The paper argues that our educational reality generally exposes by far tremendous preoccupation with 'teaching' at the expense of 'learning'; and, yet, for a 'learning' culture to prevail, the paper posits that educators, communities, and concerned administrations have to maintain mechanisms and applications that most consistently and truthfully both preach and put into effect their new convictions and ideals about maximizing learner role toward nourishing and cherishing a culture of learning at school. Finally, the paper assesses the contributions of a school learning culture as a maker of total educational quality and spells out the fundamental conditions and requirements for securing a climate for learning and, most importantly, a culture for learning at school. This chapter is an attempt to address the key issue of assessing the real contributions of our schools and the system of formal education in providing our children with quality education, one that values 'learning.' It comes to fruition through learner reflection and active involvement in the learning process as well as through lively participation and interaction with peers and teachers. The chapter analyzes the educational context of formal education at school level with particular focus on the current status of formal education in Egyptian public education as a context for other educational settings around the world that exhibit similar characteristics, needs, and aspirations. The chapter starts with examining the teaching–learning relationship as it exists in our everyday school practice and in educational thinking, one that reflects an overwhelmingly preoccupation with 'teaching' at the expense of 'learning.' The importance of a rationale for a culture of learning is emphasized, and the relationship between learning and attainment of educational quality is highlighted, with discussion of conditions conducive for the creation of a school learning culture.

Chapter 56 Educational Leadership with Eyes and Hearts Wide Open, Grzegorz Mazurkiewicz

The age of dictat and bureaucracy can no longer expect compliance with instructions and action blueprints. For leadership the starting point has to be with a deep, and deepening, understanding of human learning, motivation, and evolving needs, that is the thesis of this chapter that argues for radical change in the relationship among the various actors who create the conditions for learning and teaching. Schools can no longer meet the needs of young people without a quality of leadership, which is alert to the profound impact of social change and is proactive in changing mindsets and practices that follow.

Chapter 57 Leading Assessment for Learning, Sue Swaffield

This chapter addresses issues of leading assessment for learning, using the four constituent nations of the United Kingdom as the context for discussion. An introduction to assessment for learning provides historical background, definition, principles, key practices, and essential features, and briefly sets out the underlying conceptions of learning and assessment. Next the differing histories and paths of the development of assessment for learning in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland are traced. Similarities and differences are drawn, and the leadership of AfL in the four countries is compared. The particular leadership roles and actions of students, teachers, school, and local authority leaders are considered, before the five principles of a 'Leadership for Learning' framework are used to analyze the leadership of AfL in the United Kingdom.

Part IX: Responding to Diversity: Different Ways of Moving Toward Leadership for Learning

Chapter 58 Education Leaders Can Reduce Educational Disparities, Russell Bishop

This chapter is about how education leaders can act to reduce educational disparities for indigenous and other minoritized peoples through strategic goal setting, supporting effective pedagogies of relations, promoting distributed leadership, enacting inclusivity, using evidence, and owning the need for reform. Examples are drawn from a large-scale, theory-based education reform project called Te Kotahitanga, which is currently running in 50 secondary schools in New Zealand. Developing a model for effective leadership needs to commence with the

understanding that the key to change is teacher action supported by responsive structural reform (Elmore, 2004). In our earlier work (Bishop et al., 2003, 2007), we investigated what effective teacher action looks like. This chapter presents a model of what "responsive structural reform" looks like in practice and what leaders need to do to implement and sustain gains made in student performance at the classroom, school, and system-wide levels.

Chapter 59 Same Mother, Different Lives: The Social Organization of Leadership for Learning Across Three Chinese Societies, Allan Walker and Frank Xue-Ju Wang

This chapter investigates how social context impacts leadership for learning across three Chinese societies (Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan). Leadership for learning is defined as the dynamic process in which school stakeholders interact with one another to set the conditions for student learning. The first section outlines and compares the political, economic, institutional, and cultural contexts as well as school leadership across the societies. The comparisons are then brought together to identify potential linkages between the contexts and leadership for learning. Subsequent analysis suggests that social contexts impact leadership for learning in important ways. For example, they help to shape stakeholders' powers, which in turn influences what stakeholders do to have their say in student learning. The chapter argues the need for increased micro-political analysis of leadership for learning.

Chapter 60 Assessing and Understanding Quality in the Arab Region, Ekhleif Tarawneh

This chapter addresses the question of how quality assurance in Higher Education Institutions is being assessed in the Arab Region. Some interpretations about the concept of quality, quality assessment, quality understanding, quality principles, and basic issues used in the assessment of quality are discussed. The chapter examines the understanding of both "quality" and "assessment" and has drawn some conclusions about quality assessment in the Arab Region in general and Jordan in particular. The chapter also discusses the experiences of various Arab states that have established quality assurance commissions or organizations that have initiated steps toward strengthening partnerships between similar quality assurance commissions or organizations in other Arab states. The chapter identifies existing gaps in the current knowledge of quality assurance such as participation on a small scale, different languages, geographic location, lack of QA (Quality Assurance) awareness and its concepts, lack of funds, and the absence of professional quality assurance expertise.

Chapter 61 Administrative Approaches to Diversity: Sharing and Imposing Meaning, James Ryan

This chapter explores the ways in which educational leaders respond to selected policy issues in diverse communities. Toward this end, it analyzes two cases. The first case revolves around religion/culture. In this particular case, the school has been called upon to resolve an issue that involves values that differ from the Christian values to which school administrators are accustomed. The other case focuses on issues of discipline. In the described case, the community perceives student violation of school rules in a different light than the school administrators. The chapter concludes with observations on the two cases and what the implications are for leadership for learning.

Chapter 62 Zimbabwe in Transition: Rethinking the School Leadership Conditions Fostering Transition, Chrispen Chiome and Mupa Paul

This chapter seeks to synthesize research and literature on the kind of leadership that is needed to preside over the transitional period faced in Zimbabwe. It seeks to identify innovative and successful initiatives and practices that the Zimbabwe government might adopt to foster smooth transition in schools and policy options that it can pursue in order to achieve the heightened expectations of schools and their leaders in a changing environment. The chapter hopes to provoke discussion about the changes necessary to meet the leadership challenges facing Zimbabwean school heads in a transitional period and to provide policy makers with information that will assist them in formulating and implementing school leadership policies that lead to quality teaching and learning. Finally, it hopes to encourage all those with a stake or an interest in education to consider rethinking the role of school leadership in a changing environment.

Chapter 63 Findings in Translation: Negotiating and Leading Learning Across Borders, Francesca Brotto

This chapter uses the metaphor of 'translation' to look at learning, leadership, and their dialogic bridging across national boundaries through international project work aimed at school improvement. In doing so, it takes an intercultural perspective following three discussion threads related to meaning-making, dissemination/cross-fertilization of learning, and change, with particular attention given to some of the materials and data emerging from the Bridges across Boundaries international project. Focusing essentially on issues related to context and cultural diversity, examples from European

and non-European collaborative initiatives are used in the discussion also to reveal resourceful 'third spaces' for learning and for the exercise of agency within and beyond international project partnerships. The chapter thus upholds the idea that an international project wishing to impact learning and leadership issues in schools needs to iteratively and interculturally enact essential elements of the two within the partnership itself and that a logic of translation, as the 'reversal of the logic of Utopia' (Tagliagambe, 2007), may be especially appropriate to achieve this aim.

Chapter 64 School Culture and Pupil Performance: Evidence from Lesotho, Vitallis Chikoko and Amelia Tantso Rampai

This chapter reports on a study conducted in two Lesotho schools, about cultures associated with high academic performance in a context where many schools in the country seemed to perform poorly. After introducing free primary education for all (FPE), the schools witnessed large enrolments, which resulted in the meagre teaching and learning resources available being over-stretched. This negatively affected the academic performance of many schools, measured by examination results. Despite these developments, some schools still achieve high academic results. The study therefore sought to understand the cultures of such schools. The study involved interviewing teachers, analyzing documents, and observing the goings-on in the two schools. Findings show that the schools maintained a good balance between social cohesion and social control. They emphasized learning in all they did. The 'we' culture brought about a sense of responsibility on teachers as collectives and as individuals. The schools ventured into trying something new and otherwise considered to be 'against the grain' in most schools, that is, subject specialization on the part of teachers. Also, the two schools transformed the absence of resources such as teaching guides from being a problem to an opportunity to create their own guides, tailor-made for their specific schools. From the findings, we learn that leaders for learning must create conditions that enable everyone in the school including themselves to be continually learning. It is useful to help organization members not simply to experience but to create something new in their work. Sharing leadership is one way of creating such conditions. Finally, social cohesion, where teachers identify themselves and their work as a collective, the 'we' factor, needs to be nurtured in every school.

Chapter 65 Reimagining Disadvantaged Community and Family Leadership for Learning: An (Im)modest Proposal, Greer Johnson & Paula Jervis-Tracey

This chapter challenges conventional notions of community and parental involvement in schooling, especially where it relates to those members of the community who do not have natural synergies with formal school-based learning. The chapter

presents a proposal that defies deficit theories of upskilling an unrepresented group in favor of a way forward that invites parents to lead and engage in their children's learning through a two-way conduit of respectful practice between communities, homes, and schools.

Part X: Afterword

Chapter 66 Thinking and Acting Both Locally and Globally: What Do We Know Now and How Do We Continue to Improve? John MacBeath and Tony Townsend

In the final chapter John MacBeath and Tony Townsend try to bring together the key elements of what was found during the course of the handbook chapters. One major issue is the need to find a way to restore balance to what the purpose of schools is and to support teachers, school leaders, and even whole systems to promote leadership for learning in all of its breadth and complexity while both political and community interests still focus on maximising test scores on narrowly focused outcomes. They ask whether the term 'leadership for learning' is just another way of saying 'instructional leadership' and argue against this, but suggest that further research is necessary to tease out the differences between the two, and one possible area for such work is looking at school ecology as a means of supporting both leadership and learning.

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