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# Editorial
# The inaugural issue of the REAL

**Kadir Beycioglu**
*Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir, Turkey*

On behalf Turkish Educational Administration Research & Development Association (EARDA), with pride and honor we welcome to Volume 1, Issue 1 of the new journal focusing on educational administration and leadership research.

As a peer-reviewed, open-access international journal publishing papers in English, Research in Educational Administration and Leadership (REAL) embraces manuscripts of all research methods including quantitative, qualitative, mix-methods studies, case studies, reviews, and new practices of research. The core goal of the Research in Educational Administration and Leadership (REAL) is to provide latest research on educational administration and leadership in all levels of education – from pre-primary to higher education – based on the first-hand experience, observation and knowledge of policy makers, practitioners and researchers in order to form an international matter of discussion for all those working in the field of educational administration and leadership.

This journal provides significant analysis of policy, theory, and methodology related to educational administration and leadership. The REAL seeks articles on timely and critical issues from researchers in all educational settings, including schools, higher education institutions, adult education centers, etc. The uniqueness of the REAL lies behind its aim to contribute to our field from remote place standing there away from "the West".

In this two volumed inaugural issue (second will be published in December, 2016), we have papers from leading researchers of different contexts. In the first issue Tony Bush aims to examine how effective leadership and management are practiced in England and discuss leadership structures and processes in English schools, explain how principals are prepared for their leadership roles, and examine the evidence on the impact of leadership on school and student outcomes. In a qualitative study, Sally J. Zepeda examines the perspectives of principals related to professional development for teachers on formal plans of remediation for underperformance in the classroom in the US context. The paper by Charles F. Webber profiles the evolving role of educational administrators and leaders in higher education. Using a quantitative method, Pamela S. Angelle and Corey A. DeHart aims to employ confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to compare the four-factor model of teacher leadership with three alternative models. Lars G. Björk and Tricia Browne-Ferrigno examine findings from recent nationwide studies on superintendents of Nordic countries to find out the shifts in national education policy altered how school districts were organized, managed, and governed which in turn reconfigured superintendents' roles.

We hope this journal will provide a place, in which educational administration and leadership researchers will find the latest issues in the field. We would like to thank many leading scholars of the field who have joined our advisory or editorial board. We expect our distinguished international advisory board, editorial team, and active supporters will share their work through the REAL to contribute to the development of our field together.

Kadir Beycioglu, PhD

Editor.

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# School Leadership and Management in England: The Paradox of Simultaneous Centralisation and Decentralisation

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**Abstract**

*Effective leadership and management are increasingly recognised as vital components of successful schooling. This paper examines how they are practiced in England, where there is a high degree of centralization, notably in respect of finance and staffing, but within a tightly constrained curriculum and inspection framework. The paper discusses leadership structures and processes in English schools, explains how principals are prepared for their leadership roles, and examines the evidence on the impact of leadership on school and student outcomes. It concludes that leadership will continue to play a significant part in school improvement.*

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## Introduction

Schools operate within a legislative framework set down by national, provincial or state parliaments. One of the key aspects of such a framework is the degree of decentralization in the educational system. Highly centralized systems tend to be bureaucratic and to allow little discretion to schools and local communities. Decentralized systems devolve significant powers to subordinate levels. Where such powers are devolved to the institutional level, we may speak of 'self-management'.

Decentralization involves a process of reducing the role of central government in planning and providing education. It can take many different forms. In the United Kingdom (UK), decentralization began with the 1988 Education Reform Act and has been further developed in subsequent legislation. It is evident in three main ways:

- Devolution
- Participative democracy, involving participation by school stakeholders
- Market mechanism, involving a significant measure of consumer choice.

## Devolution

Devolution involves the granting of powers by national governments to subordinate bodies. The UK government devolved significant powers to a Scottish parliament, and reduced powers to Welsh and Northern Irish assemblies, in 1999. Education is one of the main powers devolved to these bodies, with school policies being determined within the Scottish parliament and the two assemblies. The government is now responsible for education in England but not in the rest of the UK. This paper will focus mainly on England, the most populous of the four countries.

## Participative Democracy

This aspect of decentralization involves stakeholders becoming directly involved in school governance. It extends the concept of democracy beyond national and devolved bodies to the institutional level. It can be a significant feature of nation-building, as in post-Apartheid South Africa, or a recognition of the need for lay involvement in schooling. In England, each school has a governing body, with representatives of parents, the local community, teachers and other staff, with the headteacher as an ex officio member. The SGB chair must be a lay member (parent or community member). Caldwell and Spinks's (1992: 4) definition provides a clear link between self governance and decentralization: 'A self-managing school is a school in a system of education where there has been significant and consistent decentralization to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources.'

## Market Mechanism

The application of market principles to education means that consumers may exercise choice, notably in deciding which school their children will attend. However, the choice is constrained by the capacity of the school, meaning that popular schools are often over-subscribed. This has led some commentators to describe school choice as a manifestation of a 'quasi-market', meaning that it has some, but not all, features of the market place. Parents can exercise choice but cannot be certain that their preferred school will be able to accommodate their children.

## Research Findings

The research on self-management in England (Bush, Coleman and Glover, 1993; Levacic, 1995; Thomas and Martin, 1996) largely suggests that the shift towards school autonomy has been beneficial. These perspectives are consistent with much of the international

evidence on self-management (OECD 1994). Caldwell (2008: 249), one of the founders of the 'self-managing schools' movement, argues that the benefits of self-management are 'relatively straightforward':

> 'Each school contains a unique mix of students' needs, interests, aptitudes and aspirations, and those at the school level are best placed to determine the particular mix of all the resources available to achieve optimal outcomes'.

Autonomous schools and colleges may be regarded as potentially more efficient and effective but much depends on the nature and quality of internal leadership and management if these potential benefits are to be realized. Self-management also serves to expand the scope of leadership and management, providing the potential for principals and senior staff to have a greater impact on school outcomes than was possible in the era of state control (Bush 2011).

**Simultaneous Centralisation and Decentralisation: A Paradox**

In England, there has been significant decentralisation to school level in respect of budgets, school choice and governance, but the curriculum remains centralised. A highly prescriptive national curriculum is in place for primary and secondary schools, with some exceptions (see below). The national curriculum covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject. Each subject has a 'programme of study', setting out what children should learn. Compulsory schooling is divided into four 'key phases', as shown in table 1.

At the end of each key stage, there are national, or teacher, assessments, to establish if children have reached the level of attainment expected at that stage (ibid).

Table 1

*National curriculum key stages (www.gov.uk/nationalcurriculum)*

| Phase | Key stage | Year | Age-group |
|---|---|---|---|
| Primary | KS1 | Years 1-2 | 5-7 |
| Primary | KS2 | Years 3-6 | 7-11 |
| Secondary | KS3 | Years 7-9 | 11-14 |
| Secondary | KS4 | Years 9-11 | 14-16 |

The implementation of the national curriculum is monitored through an inspection process overseen by the statutory Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). Ofsted (2012:4) explains the purpose of inspections:

> 'The inspection of a school provides an independent evaluation of its effectiveness and a diagnosis of what it should do to improve. It is based on a range of evidence available to inspectors that is evaluated against a national framework'.

Inspectors are required to report on the quality of education, notably:

- Pupil achievement
- Quality of teaching
- Behaviour and safety of pupils
- Quality of leadership and management

(Ofsted 2012: 5).

Judgments on these four criteria, and on the overall effectiveness of the school, are in four categories:

1. Outstanding
2. Good
3. Requires improvement
4. Inadequate

(Ibid)

Many schools follow Ofsted expectations closely to avoid a negative report. Most teachers are like Bottery's (1998: 24) 'Alison', who examines every issue in relation to their school's Ofsted report. Hoyle and Wallace criticise the 'visionary rhetoric' of many schools and claim that the reality is that visions have to confirm to centralised expectations and to satisfy Ofsted inspectors; 'any vision you like as long as it's central governments'

The prescriptive national curriculum, policed by a national inspection body, provides a sharp contrast to the decentralised aspects of schools; governance, school choice and budgets. A distinction can be made between what schools should do, which is prescribed, and how they choose to do it, which is discretionary. While the English system has several self-managing features, the core activities are centrally prescribed.

**New Forms of Autonomous Schooling**

The advent of new forms of schooling in the 21st century has extended the trend towards 'constrained autonomy'. In 2000, the previous Labour government introduced academies. These were sponsored schools operating as charities on the basis of a 'funding agreement' with central government and having no formal connection with the local authority. There were 203 such academies, mostly established in deprived areas, described by government ministers as 'independent state schools' (Glatter 2012: 564).

The new Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition government expanded this concept, with more than 2300 academies in place by September 2012 (Higham and Earley 2013). There was a powerful incentive for schools to convert to academy status as they received additional income, taken from local authority budgets. The post-2015 Conservative government announced plans for all schools to become academies by 2020 but this was strongly opposed by teachers and politicians and has now been modified. The coalition government also introduced a new category, called 'free schools', established by

parents, teachers, or other groups, but funded by government (Glatter 2012: 564).

Academies and free schools are not required to follow the national curriculum but they are still subject to the Ofsted inspection process. They must teach a broad and balanced curriculum, including English, maths, science and religious education (www.gov.uk./nationalcurriculum).

The introduction of these new forms of government was accompanied by political rhetoric about their popularity and value. Michael Gove (2012: 3), former Secretary of State for Education, claimed that 'greater freedom and autonomy for school leaders is the route to genuine and lasting school reform'. However, this claim is challenged by academics. Glatter (2012: 564) states that, 'despite the persistent and growing emphasis on autonomy, most school practitioners consider themselves significantly constrained by government requirements'. Higham and Earley (2013) explain this paradox in terms similar to the 'what' and 'how' distinction made earlier in this paper. They argue that this is partly due to the nature of school autonomy, which from 1988 focused on the delegation of financial and site management, and aspects of deregulation, while the traditional fields of professional autonomy, including curriculum and assessment, were prescribed through the National Curriculum and tests.

## School Leadership and Management Structures

School governing bodies have discretion to determine their leadership and management structures; they are not prescribed by national or local government. The only legal requirement is to appoint a headteacher. Other senior positions, such as deputy or assistant heads, and middle manager posts, such as heads of department or pastoral leaders, are usually appointed. School structures vary, with different titles being used, but larger schools usually have one or more deputy heads, a few assistant heads, and several academic and pastoral middle managers. Research on high

performing schools (Bush and Glover 2012) found that all schools had large senior leadership teams (SLTs). Two of the four secondary schools in their study had nine people in their leadership teams, while another had seven and the smallest school had six members.

The trend towards larger SLTs is influenced by two main factors. First, the devolution of many additional responsibilities to school level has expanded leadership and management activities beyond the point where they can be handled by the headteacher alone, or by a small number of senior staff (Bush 2011). School leaders are now responsible for managing the school site, all aspects of school budgets, including staff and equipment, and marketing the school to secure sufficient enrolments in a competitive quasi-market, as well as traditional professional responsibilities for managing the curriculum and learner welfare. A second, and linked, factor is a move away from the previous belief in the value of singular leadership. Heroic models of leadership, where strong heads are the main decision-makers, have been supplanted, or supplemented, by shared approaches, epitomised most strongly by notions of distributed leadership (Harris 2013). Critics of this relatively new leadership concept (Fitzgerald and Gunter 2006, Hartley 2010) argue that distributed leadership is at best a device to share leadership and management activities and, at worst, a form of 'managerialism', with teachers being required to take on additional tasks. The extra responsibilities imposed on schools have clear implications for leadership preparation and development.

## Preparing and Developing School Leaders

There is considerable diversity in the scale, nature and impact of the leadership preparation and development models in use in different countries. The pattern adopted in each nation reflects its collective sense of what is appropriate to underpin the quality of education in the 21st century. In evaluating these diverse approaches, we should acknowledge the vital importance of culture and context

in shaping education, leadership and leadership development in each country:

> 'Models of preparatory training, certification, selection, assessment, induction and ongoing development for school leaders are necessarily rooted in specific national conditions and contexts. They are the product of unique, and dynamically changing, sets of circumstances – political, economic, social, cultural, historical, professional and technical – in that country' (Bolam 2004: 251).

The establishment of the English National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in November 2000 is probably the most significant global initiative for leadership development. Referring to the OECD study of nine countries (CERI 2001), Bolam (2004: 260) says that 'none of them match up to the college's unique combination of features'. Crow (2004: 296) adds that the NCSL has the opportunity 'to be a driving force for world-class leadership in our schools and the wider community'.

Simkins (2012) notes that patterns of leadership development provision in England have evolved in response to changing conceptions of how the school system should be organised. Bolam (2004: 251) says that the NCSL should be treated as the 'the latest stage of an evolving policy innovation'. As noted above, the 1988 Education Reform Act, described as 'the defining legislative moment' by Simkins (2012), located many more responsibilities at school level and greatly expanded the management role of headteachers and their senior colleagues. The government appointed a School Management Task Force (SMTF) in 1989 and its influential report (SMTF 1990) set the agenda for school management development for the next few years (Bush 2004). Probably its most important legacy was the establishment of mentoring schemes for new headteachers (Bush and Coleman 1995).

The next major development was the establishment of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), which took an interest in leadership development as well as the pre-service education of teachers. Bush (2008) debates whether this change in the discourse of the field, from management to leadership, was substantive or semantic. The TTA set

up the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), the first national qualification for aspiring heads, in 1997.

Bolam (2004) notes that the idea of national college was discussed as early as the mid 1980s, but was rejected because it was felt that a residential college could not cope with the scale of need, with some 25,000 heads and up to 70,000 senior and middle managers. He argues that it returned to political prominence in the late 1990s, for three main reasons:

- It fitted the new Labour government's plans to raise standards in education.
- Developments in ICT meant that the residential dimension became less significant.
- The government was prepared to invest significantly in a national college and its ICT infrastructure.

Following a period of consultation, the NCSL opened in temporary accommodation in November 2000. Former Prime Minister Tony Blair opened its state-of-the-art learning and conference centre in Nottingham in 2002. The NCSL took over responsibility for the NPQH, as well as acquiring, and greatly expanding, TTA's suite of leadership development programmes.

**Why is leadership preparation important?**

There is great interest in educational leadership in the early part of the 21st century. This is because of the widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and student outcomes. In many parts of the World, including England, there is increasing recognition that schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible education for their students and learners (Bush 2008).

While the argument that leadership does make a difference is increasingly, if not universally, accepted, there is ongoing debate about what preparation is required to develop appropriate leadership behaviours. In England, as in many other countries, school leaders

begin their professional careers as teachers and progress to headship via a range of leadership tasks and roles, often described as 'middle leadership'. Principals may continue to teach following their appointment, particularly in small primary schools. This leads to a widespread view that teaching is their main activity (Bush 2010).

This focus on principals as head teachers underpins the view that a teaching qualification and teaching experience are the only necessary requirements for school leadership. However, from the late 20th century, there has been a growing realisation that headship is a specialist occupation which requires specific preparation. Bush (2008) identifies four factors underpinning this change of attitude:

- The expansion of the role of school principal, arising from enhanced accountability requirements and the devolution of additional powers to the school level following the 1988 Education Reform Act.
- The increasing complexity of school contexts, arising from globalisation, technological and demographic changes, and the demands of enhanced site-based responsibilities.
- Recognition that preparation is a moral obligation, because principals have onerous responsibilities that differ from those facing teachers, and leaders should have an 'entitlement' (Watson 2003) to specialised preparation.
- Recognition that effective preparation and development make a difference. Leadership is not 'fixed at birth' (Avolio 2005: 2), leading to a view that systematic preparation, rather than inadvertent experience, is more likely to produce effective leaders (Bush 2008).

**Professional and Organisational Socialisation**

Heck (2003) distinguishes between professional and organisational socialisation. The former includes formal preparation and the early phases of professional practice. Organisational socialisation involves the process of becoming familiar with the specific context where leadership is practiced. Where leaders are preparing to take a more senior position, such as principal, they are engaged in a process of

professional socialisation. Because future leaders rarely know where they will be appointed, context-specific preparation is not possible, although developing skills of situational analysis is both possible and desirable. In-service leadership development, however, needs to include a significant element of school-specific learning. Many leadership programmes, particularly those provided by universities, may be regarded as predominantly aiming at 'knowledge for understanding' (Bolam 1999). These courses focus mainly on the 'content' aspects of the leader's role, including leadership for learning, managing finance, and leading and managing people (Bush 2008).

## Leadership Development Processes

An important consideration in designing leadership development programmes is to determine the balance between curriculum content and delivery processes. While there is some evidence of an international curriculum for leadership development (Bush and Jackson 2002), there is considerable variety in the modes of delivery. Several NCSL programmes focused on process rather than content. Instead of the adoption of a prescribed curriculum, leaders were developed through a range of action modes and support mechanisms, often customized to the specific needs of leaders through what is increasingly referred to as 'personalised learning'. Such individualization is justified because school leaders are adults, and senior professionals, who expect to be involved in determining their own leadership learning. Mentoring and coaching are two examples of personalized learning.

### Mentoring

Barnett and O'Mahony (2008: 222) refer to 'the growing recognition [of the need] to provide support for aspiring and practicing leaders' and point to mentoring (and coaching) as key support processes. The mentor may be a more experienced leader or the process may be one of peer mentoring. They add that mentoring

is 'intended to encourage formal and informal career development [and] reciprocal learning between mentors and mentees' (ibid: 238). Pocklington and Weindling (1996: 189) argue that 'mentoring offers a way of speeding up the process of transition to headship'.

Hobson and Sharp's (2005) systematic review of the literature found that all major studies of formal mentoring programmes for new heads reported that such programmes have been effective, and that the mentoring of new heads can result in a range of perceived benefits for both mentees and mentors. However, mentoring is only likely to succeed if there is careful selection of mentors, specific training linked to the needs of the programme, and purposive matching of mentors and mentees.

**Coaching**

Coaching was often included in NCSL programmes (Bush, Glover and Harris 2007). It differs from mentoring in being short-term (Barnett and O'Mahony 2008), and being focused on developing specific skills (Bassett 2001), but such distinctions are not applied consistently, and coaching and mentoring practices often seem quite similar.

Simkins et al (2006), looking at NCSL approaches, conclude that three important issues affect the coaching experience: coach skills and commitment, the time devoted to the process, and the place of coaching within broader school leadership development strategies. The NPQH is one major programme to include coaching. Bush, Glover and Harris (2007) argue that coaching appears to work best when training is thorough and specific, when there is careful matching of coach and coachee, and when it is integral to the wider learning process.

**Group learning**

Despite the tendency to emphasise individual leadership learning, group activities play a significant part in many development

programmes. While this may sometimes be an opportunity for an essentially didactic approach, delivering a 'body of knowledge', there are several other group learning strategies that may be employed to promote participants' learning. The main approach to group learning in NCSL programmes is networking. Bush, Glover and Harris's (2007) overview of NCSL evaluations shows that networking is the most favoured mode of leadership learning. It is likely to be more effective when it is structured and has a clear purpose. Its main advantage is that it is 'live learning' and provides strong potential for ideas transfer. Visits with a clear purpose may also lead to powerful leadership learning. Visiting similar contexts (e.g. other small primary schools) appears to be particularly valuable.

**Mandatory or Discretionary Provision?**

The NPQH was previously mandatory for new first time heads and available only via the College. This monopoly position imposed great pressure on the NCSL to make sure it was 'fit for purpose'. A lack of pluralism provides a good prospect of a genuinely standardised qualification, but runs the risk of damaging the whole schools' system if it is inadequate (Bush 2008). The government decided to end mandatory status in 2012, perhaps the first example globally of a retreat from requiring trained and qualified principals. This change was accompanied by a licensing system. The College ceased to be the NPQH provider and 28 licences were awarded, on a regional basis, to provide enhanced choice for schools and leaders. The licensees include 'outstanding' schools, as judged by Ofsted inspections, universities, local authorities and private sector bodies. This privatised model applies to NPQH and to two other qualifications (one for senior leaders and one for middle leaders).

## The Impact of Leadership and Management

Leithwood and Levin (2004: 2) note that 'linking leadership to student outcomes in a direct way is very difficult to do'. They conclude that 'a study that seeks to assess the impact that school

leadership can have on school outcomes faces some formidable challenges' (ibid: 25). This is largely because leadership is a mediated variable, impacting on student outcomes through influencing teachers' classroom practice.

Research in England (e.g. Leithwood et al 2006) shows strong links between effective leadership and school improvement. Robinson's (2007) meta-analysis of international research indicates that direct leader involvement in curriculum planning and professional development is associated with moderate or large leadership effects. 'This suggests that the closer leaders are to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to make a difference to students' (Robinson 2007: 21). Robinson et al (2008), and Robinson et al (2009), add that the average effect of instructional leadership on student outcomes was almost four times greater than that of transformational leadership. Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development had the greatest effect size of 0.84 but planning, co-ordinating and evaluating teaching and curriculum (0.42), and establishing goals and expectations (0.42) were also significant (Robinson et al 2009). Leithwood et al (2006) note that there are no recorded cases of enhanced school and learner outcomes, without talented leadership. It is now also widely established that good leaders are 'made', not 'born' (Bush 2008).

The impact of leaders on school and learner outcomes is indirect. The relationship between leadership and learning outcomes is fraught with conceptual and methodological challenges. Conceptually, the assumption is that principals and other leaders determine the climate for enhanced teaching and learning, and put in place processes and resources, especially teachers, designed to improve test results and other school outcomes, including attendance and learner behaviour. A normative model (figure 1) illustrates how leadership, and leadership development, impact on learner outcomes.

Figure 1:

*Normative model showing links between leadership development and learner outcomes (adapted from Leithwood and Levin 2004, and Bush and Glover 2012a).*

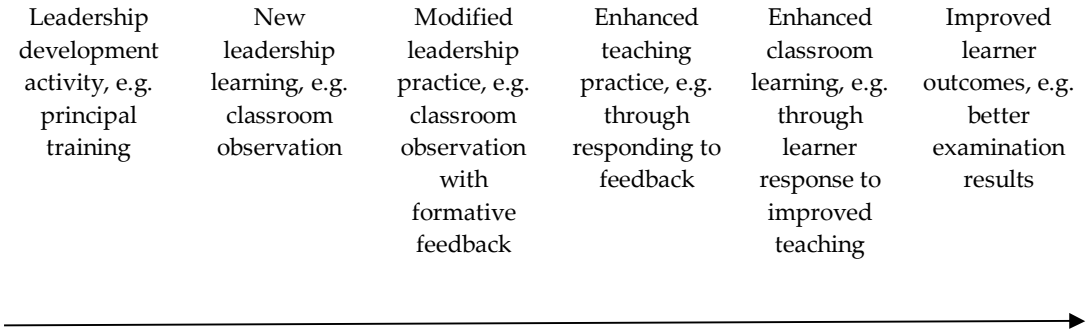


Figure 1 presents a plausible model to explain how leadership development activities can lead to enhanced learner outcomes. However, there is the potential for 'leaks' at every stage of the model.

- The leadership development activity may not lead to new leadership learning. A range of provider and participant variables may inhibit learning.
- New leadership learning may not lead to modified leadership practice. Participant and school context variables may prevent implementation of leadership learning.
- Modified leadership practice may not lead to enhanced teaching practice. Much depends on whether leaders are able to motivate, and monitor, teachers to improve their teaching practice.
- Enhanced teaching practice may not lead to enhanced classroom learning. A range of school and learner variables could inhibit learning including, for example, socio-economic

problems such as poverty, hunger, unemployment, lack of homework facilities, and poor learner and family attitudes to schooling.

- Enhanced classroom learning may not lead to improved learner outcomes. While learning might improve, this may not be sustained or might not be translated into successful examination results.

(Bush and Glover 2012a)

Leithwood et al (2006) conducted major research on the relationship between school leadership and student outcomes in England, funded by the government. Their findings are significant and show that:

- School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning.
- 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.
- School leaders are responsive to the contexts in which they work.

Perhaps the most important of these findings is the emphasis on distributed leadership and links to the common-sense assumption that several leaders can have more impact than the principal acting alone. Leithwood et al (2006: 12) claim that:

> 'Total leadership accounted for a quite significant 27% of the variation in student achievement across schools. This is a much higher proportion of explained variation (two to three times higher) than is typically reported in studies of individual headteacher effects'.

The Leithwood et al (2006) research, and the Robinson (2007) meta-analysis, collectively show that leadership is very important for school improvement and learning outcomes. The growing interest in school leadership, in England and globally, is underpinned strongly by such powerful evidence.

## Conclusion: The Future of School Leadership and Management in England

The 1988 Education Reform Act, and subsequent legislation, has greatly expanded the role of leadership within a decentralised schools' system. The responsibilities for finance, staffing, the school site, and marketing, added to the traditional role of curriculum management, have led to an increase in the number of senior and middle leaders in most English schools. This growth in leadership and management responsibilities has contributed to a shortage of headteachers, notably in primary schools (Bush 2011a). This also means that most successful schools rely on what are often quite large senior leadership teams, informed by notions of distributed leadership (Bush and Glover 2012a).

Given the importance of educational leadership, Bush (2008: 125) argues that the development of effective leaders should not be left to chance. It should be a deliberate process designed to produce the best possible leadership and management for schools and colleges. School leadership is a different role from teaching and requires separate and specialised preparation. Given this widely supported claim, the decision to withdraw mandatory status from NPQH is surprising as it is certain to lead to unqualified heads being appointed in some schools.

In the past decade, there has been a global trend towards more systematic provision of leadership and management development, particularly for school principals. Hallinger (2003: 3) notes that, in 1980, 'no nation in the world had in place a clear system of national requirements, agreed upon frameworks of knowledge, and standards of preparation for school leaders'. In the 21st century, many countries, including England, are giving this a high priority, recognising its potential for school improvement. Even following the end of the NPQH's mandatory status, many potential heads undertake leadership training, with a national curriculum, before becoming principals and receive national accreditation on successful completion of the activity.

The global interest in school leadership is predicated on the widespread assumption that it will lead to school improvement, and enhanced learning outcomes. The empirical evidence for this perspective is increasing despite the difficulties of assessing impact because of the conceptual and methodological problems, discussed earlier. The research in England (Leithwood et al 2006), and globally (Robinson 2007), shows that effective school leadership makes a significant difference to classroom learning and student outcomes. As a consequence, the contemporary interest in leadership in England seems likely to continue.

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# Principals' Perspectives: Professional Learning and Marginal Teachers on Formal Plans of Improvement

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**Abstract**

*This qualitative study examined the perspectives of principals related to professional development for teachers on formal plans of remediation for underperformance in the classroom. The principles associated with job-embedded professional development as well as cognitive dissonance provided a basis for analyzing data collected throughout the interviews and analysis. The population included 12 elementary, middle, and high school principals from 2school systems in the United States. Data analysis from the interviews yielded three major findings clustered as themes related to: 1) Cognitive dissonance, professional development, and marginal teachers 2) Confidentiality trumps collaboration, and 3) Professional development by the numbers. By examining professional development practices for underperforming teachers, the findings contribute to our understanding about some perspectives that school principals hold about a population of teachers at-risk. Implications are offered.*

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## Introduction

The work of the principal remains "complex and multidimensional," and "the effectiveness of principals depends, in part, on how they allocate their time across daily responsibilities" (Rice, 2010, p. 2) including prioritizing and focusing on systems that promote the growth and development of both students and teachers (Zepeda, Jimenez, & Lanoue, 2015). Principal leadership is critical in light of accountability (Wallace Foundation, 2013; Zepeda et al., 2015), the focus on student achievement (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010), and overall efforts to improve schools (Hallinger & Heck 2010). Effective principals support teaching and learning, and they:

> Relentlessly develop and support teachers, create positive working conditions, effectively allocate resources, construct appropriate organizational policies and systems, and engage in other deep and meaningful work outside of the classroom that has a powerful impact on what happens inside it. (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015, p. 1)

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA, 2015) developed a set of standards for school leaders. The realm of this research falls with the domain of the leader being able to develop the professional capacity of school personnel, primarily teachers whose classroom performance, namely instruction, has been characterized as marginal.

In the context of the United States, teacher evaluation has been heavily influenced with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* and its call for highly-qualified teachers to teach in standards-based classrooms. Teacher quality was a step in the right direction, but this provision was not enough because "Public education defines teacher quality largely in terms of the credentials that teachers have earned, rather than on the basis of the quality of the work they do in their classrooms or the results their students achieve" (Toch & Rothman, 2008, p. 2). Darling-Hammond (2012) in many ways refocused the term teacher quality as it "refers to strong instruction that enables a

wide range of students to learn" (p. i), and this notion becomes even more important when teachers fail to perform in the classroom to the detriment of student success.

The federal priorities prescribed in the 2009 Race to the Top Program (RTT) situated teacher evaluation as its center-piece where student scores on standardized tests would be matched to individual teachers to gauge teacher effectiveness. "Teacher effectiveness, in the narrowest sense, refers to a teacher's ability to improve student learning as measured by student gains on standardized achievement tests;" however Little, Goe, and Bell (2009) cautioned that "although this is one important aspect of teaching ability, it is not a comprehensive and robust view of teacher effectiveness" (p. 1).

Teacher effectiveness matters because this qualitative study examined the perspectives of U.S. school principals about professional development targeted for marginal teachers who had been placed on formal plans of remediation for underperforming in the classroom. Moving the idea of teacher effectiveness into the classroom where instruction unfolds, effective teachers support student learning when they "follow a regular instructional cycle. They assess student learning; analyze assessment results to identify student strengths and needs; plan and implement instruction based on identified strengths and needs; and monitor student progress to further adjust instruction as needed" (Bullmaster-Day, 2011, p. 4).

In 2015, President Barack Obama signed into law, *The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*, the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965), replacing the defunct *No Child Left Behind Act* (2001) and the waivers associated with teacher and leader evaluation brought forward with the American Reinvestment Stimulus that funded the Race to the Top Program. States and their systems will now have latitude to re-examine the policy requirements of their teacher evaluation systems. In coherent systems, instructional supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development are enacted in seamless ways where these processes, if enacted with

fidelity, work in tandem to support teacher learning and growth (Zepeda, 2016, 2017). Principals are the primary actors in developing and supporting coherent approaches so that these systems benefit teachers and the instructional programs within their buildings.

This qualitative study addressed the topic of principals working with marginal teachers in their schools, and focused on their perspectives about professional development associated with the provisions described in formal plans of remediation. The principals' perspectives were analyzed and summarized to gain insight on a timely area associated with accountability and professional development for marginal teachers. This research is important because principals are not always willing to share their experiences about working with marginal teachers (Blacklock, 2002; Causey, 2010; Fuhr, 1990). This reluctance is typically attributed to the confidentiality issues related to personnel and the potential for litigation (Blacklock, 2002; Blankenship, 2017), responses of other teachers in the building (Zepeda, 2016), and possible accusations of teacher mistreatment (Blase & Blase, 2003). This study attempted to add to the research by examining principals' perspectives about professional development associated with marginal teachers on formal plans of remediation.

## Review of the Literature

As background and to frame this study, four major areas in the literature were examined including the principal as instructional leader who enacts supervision and teacher evaluation; professional development and job-embedded learning; and marginal teachers.

### The Principal and Supervision and Teacher Evaluation

Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) claim, "Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at

school"(p. 7) and, as leadership improves so too should student achievement(Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2004).There are many ways in which the principal as instructional leader has been cast in the literature. The early literature set the foundation for principal as instructional leader as one who shapes the school's instructional climate (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982) and builds capacity in others by distributing instructional leadership to those closest to the instructional program—teachers (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2013; Marks & Printy, 2003).

The Wallace Foundation (2013) indicates that principals "can no longer function simply as building managers, tasked with adhering to district rules, carrying out regulations and avoiding mistakes. They have to be (or become) leaders of learning who can develop a team delivering effective instruction" (p.6). As a key decision-maker, the principal's role in leading practices and procedures associated with instructional supervision and teacher evaluation are important to understand (Kimball & Milanowski, 2009).

**Supervision**

Supervision is a formative process that positions teachers as active learners. Clinical supervision includes classroom observations and conferencing before and after observations (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2014; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013; Zepeda, 2017). Through this model of supervision, school leaders are able to give timely and specific feedback to promote teacher reflection (Schooling, Toth, & Marzano), wrestle with difficult problems in a fault-free environment that supports taking calculated risks (Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004), and receive honest feedback about performance (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Kyriakides, Demetrio, & Charlambous, 2006). Teachers want principals who are present (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998), who have built relationships based on trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2014), and who have at heart the teachers' best interest, wanting to see them improve with the appropriate supports.

**Teacher Evaluation**

Teacher evaluation systems in the United States have become complicated and are at the forefront of just about every school, system, and state since the implementation of the waivers with Race to the Top. The Race to the Top Program created by the Obama administration under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009included revising teacher evaluation systems and processes that would include, for example, more uses of student performance data, or value-added measures (VAMs), in the overall assessment for individual teachers. Essentially, student achievement data are linked to individual teachers, and the growth, positive or negative, is attributed to teacher performance. The *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* goes into effect in 2016 and leaves the policies related to the evaluation of teachers and leaders to the discretion of the states. The shifts in power now situate states as the major decision makers in matters related to teacher and leader evaluation.

Teacher evaluation is both a formative and a summative process, and the formative-summative struggle has been a perennial one (Gall & Acheson, 2010; Glickman et al., 2014, Popham, 2013). Admitting an enduring struggle with the dynamics of the formative-summative tensions, Popham (2013) suggests that school leaders engage in both, but to do so "separately" (p. 22). The results of all formative processes lead to summative evaluation for the year (Nolan & Hoover, 2011). The primary intents of summative evaluation are to meet state statutes and district policies, assign teachers a rating at the end of the year, and in some cases determine whether a teacher will return to work the following year (Stronge, 2010).

Teacher evaluation systems have failed because "teachers do not receive the feedback they need, and professional development is not aligned with areas of need" (Callahan & Sadeghi, 2014, p. 729). Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling (2009) report "Only 43 percent of teachers agree that evaluation helps teachers improve" (p. 14), and all too often, "Excellence goes unrecognized, development is

neglected and poor performance goes unaddressed" (p. 10). To continue with the thinking around coherence, high-quality professional development tailored to meet individual needs would work in tandem with supervision and teacher evaluation.

**Professional Development**

Researchers have identified features of professional development that support the transfer of learning to classroom practice(Avalos, 2011; Darling-Hammond & Falk, 2013; Desimone, 2011; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Timperley, 2008). Desimone (2011) suggested there is consensus on features of effective professional development:

- Content focus: Professional development activities should focus on subject matter content and how students learn that content
- Active learning: Teachers should have opportunities to get involved, such as observing and receiving feedback, analyzing student work, or making presentations, as opposed to passively sitting through lectures.
- Coherence: What teachers learn in any professional development activity should be consistent with other professional development, with their knowledge and beliefs, and with school, district, and state reforms and policies.
- Duration: Professional development activities should be spread over a semester and should include 20 hours or more of contact time.
- Collective participation: Groups of teachers from the same grade, subject, or school should participate in professional development activities together to build an interactive learning community. (p. 69)

These features "have been associated with changes in knowledge, practice, and, to a lesser extent, student achievement" (Desimone,

2011, p. 69), and Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) shared:

> While the impact on student achievement is a critical indicator of the effectiveness of professional development, we believe the impact of professional development on teacher knowledge and instructional practice is also relevant, as these are worthwhile outcomes in themselves that support increased learning for students. (p.15)

Job-embedded learning is a key feature of professional development that supports teachers as adult learners.

## Job-embedded Learning

Job-embedded learning is a construct that supports (1) relevance to the individual teacher, (2) feedback as an integral to the process, and (3) the facilitation of transfer of new skills into practice (Zepeda, 205). Wood and Killian (1998) define job-embedded learning as "learning that occurs as teachers and administrators engage in their daily work activities" (p. 52). Among their findings is 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. . . . [B]oth 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)

Zepeda (2012, 2015, & 2017) promotes that coherence is built between instructional supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development when learning for adults is embedded within the workday over a sustained period of time. Through such processes as "collective critical reflection," "emphasis on teaching skills," and the linkages to "formative evaluation results" job-embedded learning evolves to foster highly-personalized learning for teachers (Creemers, Kyriakides, & Antoniou, 2013).

## Marginal Teachers

The issues surrounding marginal teacher performance point to the need for remediation through very formal processes including targeted professional learning. In the US, there are over 3.1 million full-time teachers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014) and between 5 to 15 percent of teachers in any given school are marginal (Tucker, 2001). Marginal teacher performance is a perennial issue; however, "improving teaching quality and reducing the variability within that quality is a primary responsibility of school district leaders, building level leaders, and teachers" (Mead, Rotherman, & Brown, 2012, p. 3).

There are no universal descriptions of what constitutes marginal performance, but from the literature, marginal teacher performance includes sporadic and weak instructional approaches that do not match content and learning goals (Smith, 2008); difficulties teaching statewide content standards (Darling-Hammond, 2012); incessant classroom management issues (Jackson, 1997; Lawrence, Vachon, Leake & Leake, 2005); inadequate preparation for instruction (Fuhr, 1990). Fuhr (1990) indicated that a marginal teacher is "a fence rider" and that "marginal teachers usually do just enough to get by" while being evaluated (p. 3). Teachers whose classroom performance is marginal are often put on formal plans of remediation or what are often called plans of improvement.

## Plans of Improvement

In the United States, teachers who are designated as underperforming (marginal) are put on a plan of remediation that explicitly spells out what classroom practices must be remediated and the learning objectives for each area in need of improvement. The intents of these plans fulfill two intents. The first intent is the developmental side in which a plan of improvement "reflects the school system's concern for its teachers' professional development… [and] helping each teacher do so is an integral part of an instructional

leader's role" (Tucker, 2001, p. 53). The second intent is the legal and procedural one. A plan of improvement specifies areas that a teacher must improve. A plan of improvement includes, for example, areas of concern, objectives and goals for improvement, the strategies to meet improvement, the support and resources needed, and timelines to meet areas of concern. The plan of improvement is monitored by the principal or another school leader. The types of support include professional development intended to assist the marginal teacher to improve performance in and out of the classroom.

## Methodology

### Research design

This study was framed within the qualitative research paradigm to address the topic of principals and professional development as they worked with marginal teachers in their schools. The researcher wanted to understand "the process by which events and actions take place" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 30) and to do this, the study focused on the perspectives of principals about professional development associated with the provisions described in formal plans of remediation. Given the homogeneity of the particiapnts—12 elementary, middle, and high school principals from 2 similar school systems in the United States—a collective case study was chosen to allow the researcher to investigate several cases of the same phenomenon (Stake, 2000). The study was guided by one overall research question: What perspectives do principals have about professional development for marginal teachers on a formal plan of remediation?

### Data sources

Two school districts in the United States in a single southeastern state were purposefully selected as research sites. The purposeful sampling technique was used due to the highly-confidential nature of

the topic in general of working with marginal teachers. Essentially, the researcher had entrée into both school systems. The superintendents of the school systems were aware of the importance the findings might hold to influence not only the refinement of practices for their school principals but also the contributions such a study might have to open up new areas of inquiry given the press of accountability and evolving teacher evaluation systems in the United States. The researcher sought to select principals who had experience with personnel and who had similar training and procedural guidelines and expectations for dealing with marginal teachers. New or inexperienced principals would not be able to provide perspectives about dealing first-hand with marginal teachers.

Within each of the two school systems, six principals were interviewed and included two principals at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In total, the population included 12 participants, all practicing school principals that had 5 or more years of experience being a principal at their present site. The superintendents of the school districts gave the researcher a list of principals who had five or more years of experience in the schools which they currently served as leader. From these lists, the researcher sent an open-ended invitation to be part of the study. In total, 14 principals agreed to be part of the study, 6 from one system and 8 from another system. Before the first round of interviews, 2 participants dropped out from the study, bringing the total to 12 principals evenly distributed across the 2 school systems.

The primary source of data came from interviews that were carefully "guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin, 2009, p.106) to open the conversations between the researcher and the participants. Data collection spanned 6 months in 2012-2013 and included 2 interviews lasting approximately 1 hour with each of the 12 participants. In total, 22 interviews were conducted.

## Research Methods

As the methods of this study were framed, there were certain ethical considerations that had to be reconciled including the nature of the content of teacher evaluation and plans of improvement and that legally matters of personnel are confidential. Audio-recordings could not be used given the ethical considerations involved in matters of personnel (e.g., confidentiality), and moreover, audio-recording these meetings could have stifled, even promoted a chill effect between the principals and the researcher.

## Individual Interviews

Data included detailed notes taken during the 22 interviews, a researcher's journal in which ideas, follow-up questions, and general impressions were recorded after each interview. Throughout the duration of the research, notes, memos, and codes were made in the journal to aid in further analysis and then to frame findings. The interview was the centerpiece of data collection as the way "to gain in-depth knowledge from participants about particular phenomena, experiences, or a set of experiences…the goal is to construct as complete a picture as possible from the words and experiences of the participant" (deMarrais, 2004, p. 52). Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were used as opportunities to understand the "words that reveal the" perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104) with the hope to be able to craft a holistic picture about professional development for marginal teachers on plans of remediation.

## Document Review

Records, documents, artifacts and archival information constitute a particularly rich source of information not only about settings but also as a way to follow the data trail (Marshall &Rossman, 2011; Patton, 2002). Formal plans of remediation were an ideal source to

examine the content related to learning objectives, professional development, and timelines; however, detail study of these documents was not permissible given the confidential nature of these items. At the end of the first interview, the researcher asked participants if they would be willing to let the researcher examine a formal plan of remediation. During the second interview, 7 of the 12 principals allowed the researcher to review illustrative plans of remediation without allowing the documents to leave the office. Notes about professional development linked to the learning objectives specified with the plans of remediation were recorded.

**Data Analysis**

The process of data analysis began immediately after the first interview and continued throughout the research process. Given the highly confidential nature of this study, no interviews were audio-recorded; therefore, the data included only the researcher's notes kept in a log. The constant comparative method of data analysis was used (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As the study progressed, the ideas associated with professional development and marginal teachers were catalogued for ongoing and later analysis of the notes that numbered in length 210 typed, single- spaced pages. This process assisted the researcher to frame any ideas to ponder.

A process of coding, reducing, and sorting the data into categories was followed after the first interview. Memoing techniques allowed the researcher to record the 'ahaaa' insights, and then to develop preliminary codes for recurring items that emerged. The reduced data were used as a basis for the preliminary interpretation of the participant's perspectives about professional development and marginal teachers and their perspectives about the relationship to the plan of improvement. The second interview provided the opportunity to present the preliminary findings to the participants and to ask additional questions about areas relevant to the study. The participants were given opportunity to further elaborate or clarify

statements made during the first interview. Following the second interview, the process of coding, reducing, and sorting the data was conducted again. The second interview data were then combined with the data from the first interview to provide a more robust picture of the participant's perspectives related to professional development and marginal teachers.

The next step in the analytical process included the categorization of themes. In examining data with similar meaning, the researcher looked for emerging ideas across the responses by the principals. According to Hyener (1985), the researcher must examine clusters of meaning to establish central themes that in turn express the principal meaning of the data. It was important to analyze the data in relation to the original research question. By integrating concepts and incidents, the researcher was able to go, "back into data and forward into analysis" (Charmaz, 2005, p. 23). A more comprehensive understanding of the work of principals, professional development and the plans of improvement related to the marginal teacher emerged.

**Contexts and Participants**

The participants in the study include 12 elementary, middle, and high school principals employed in two single large, urban school systems in a southeastern state. All participants had a minimum of five years of experience as principal at their current school. Both school systems, System A and System B, were approximately homogenous related to size, student demographics, and the communities these systems served. Table 1.1 highlights System A and System B.

Table 1.1.

*Context of School Systems*

| | **System A** | **System B** |
|---|---|---|
| **Total Schools** | 29 | 28 |
| Elementary | 19 | 18 |
| Middle | 5 | 6 |
| High School | 5 | 4 |
| **Teachers** | 1,468 | 1, 421 |
| **Students** | 20.088 | 1, 421 |
| Black | 63% | 60% |
| White | 15% | 12% |
| Hispanic | 14% | 19% |
| Asian | 6% | 4% |
| Other/Multi | 2% | 5% |
| Free and Reduced Lunch | 87% | 91% |
| Graduation Rate | 83% | 79% |

## Participant Profile

Twelve participants included six from System A (2 elementary, two middle, and 2 high school principals) and six from System B (2 elementary, two middle, and 2 high school principals). The homogeneity of gender included four female elementary school principals in Systems A and B; at the middle school there was one female and one male principal and in System B there were two male middle school principals. At the high school level, all were males.

Table 1.2 further offers information about the experiences of the 12 principals.

Table 1.2.

*Experience and Education of the Participants*

| | System A | System B |
|---|---|---|
| Years of Experience in Education | 22 [averaged] | 25 [averaged] |
| Years of Experience as an Administrator in the System | | |
| Elementary | 7 | 5 |
| Middle | 8 | 7 |
| High School | 10 | 13 |
| Advanced Education | | |
| M.E.d. | All | All |
| E.Ds. | 2 | 2 |
| Ph.D/Ed.D | 4 | 4 |

**Limitations**

There are limitations to this study. The size of the sample is small and represents two very like systems related to overall demographics; however, the homogeneity of the group presents strength in thinking about cautious generalizations (Merriam, 1998). Another limitation is that the researcher had to rely on interview notes that could only be scripted given the sensitive nature about talking about marginal teaching. Although methodological procedures such as extensive memoing after each interview and member checking inviting the participants to read transcribed field notes, audio-recordings and verbatim responses to questions would have been more stable.

## Findings

The three major themes that emerged from the data are presented.

Theme 1: *Cognitive Dissonance, Professional Development, and Marginal Teachers*

Theme 2: *Confidentiality Trumps Collaboration*

Theme 3: *Professional Development by the Numbers*

The first theme centers on the cognitive dissonance experienced by the principals while with working with marginal teachers.

**Theme 1**, *Cognitive Dissonance, Professional Development, and Marginal Teachers:*

Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance provided a way to examine the perspectives of the 12 principals shared during interviews (n=22) related to professional development for marginal teachers they are or have worked with in their formal role as the leaders of their schools.

Cognitive dissonance theory is concerned with the interplay and tension between thoughts that are at odds with other thoughts. The dissonance occurs when beliefs and assumptions are contradicted by new information or when two or more ideas or values compete with each other (Aronson, 1968; Festinger, 1957; McLeod, 2014; O'Keefe, 1990; Zepeda, 2006). Cognitive dissonance increases with the magnitude of importance for the individual (Festinger, 1957). There were several instances where dissonance occurred for the principals surrounding accountability.

### Accountability and Coherence

The principals viewed the plan of improvement as a "documentation trail" that cued as one principal stated, "this plan signals you are on your way out the door," and another indicated the plan of improvement process is "emotionally charged." Participants also indicated that in many ways, the "rigid" nature of the plan of

improvement "stifled growth" because "teachers on them, only look at what they are required to do to keep their jobs." However, the principals knew they had to act on what they believed was in the best interest of the school and its students. Moreover, they believed "deep down" and "in my soul" that all teachers "want and desire to be the best they can be," shared one principal. This same principal also noted that it was his "duty" not to be influenced about a marginal teacher's performance," beyond what is "in the plan of improvement." He further elaborated that the "plan of improvement is his accountability" to teachers "and all my students."

The participants used such words and terms such as "prescriptive," "narrow," the "letter of the law," and "constraining" to describe the plan and its focus on teacher learning and improvement. The principals also felt tension leading to frustration with the plan of improvement itself because really, the document is a "legal one. In many ways, growth has nothing to do with it." This principal went on to explain that legally, "a teacher improves as a result of professional learning or not. If not, 'good bye.'"

Most principals spoke of the tensions of knowing you have a marginal teacher and the "what ifs" that could play out if teachers did not make marked improvements in their practices. The principals often referred back to students and the impact that marginal teachers have on them. One principal expressed it this way: "I am not going to stand by and continue to let a marginal teacher hurt kids." Morally, the principals knew they had to intervene on behalf of students. They followed up with accountability was contributing to the focused attention on marginal performance, and they had to do "something to curtail marginal teaching" in their schools.

The plans of improvement were viewed with a "clinical" and "definitive" lens in that only the professional development on the plan would be approved by the principals. As one principal indicated, "nothing less or nothing more" would be provided "for the

teacher." Principals reported feeling torn between mandating professional learning to fulfill the "letter of the law," and reaching out to the "reasons why" teachers were put on a plan of improvement. Many principals reported that the plan of improvement automatically put teachers on "edge," and had the potential to create a "wedge" between teachers and leaders, and put both teachers and principals in a position of being "in a fishbowl." The principals used descriptive images to describe what it was like for them to work with marginal teachers. Other metaphors and images included: "hatchet man," "walking the tightrope," "guard of the building," "bull dog," and "worst nightmare."

**Time and the Plan of Improvement**

The notion of time and the plan of improvement was a reoccurring idea with extended commentary about the significant amount of time required to successfully work with marginal teachers. Leaders experienced "frustration" with the amount of time it takes to see improvement. One principal shared "Marginal teachers can't be 'fixed' overnight!" One principal shared, that "sometimes it is gradual; sometimes it takes a couple of years to see a real change." Another principal vehemently said, "I hate how long the process takes. It can be a whole year before you even see any improvement, so that means that is a whole year that those children have lost." A middle school principal shared however, "time is not an option. I must see growth and see it quickly." Another principal said, "With accountability, we just do not have the luxury of time—and time is *not* what I am willing to give any more." A principal summarized, "accountability has been a deal changer for working with marginal teachers."

The time associated with working with marginal teachers was a tension for these leaders in that "time with marginal teachers takes time away from working with all teachers in an equitable manner." Another principal shared that she resents having to work with

marginal teachers because "others who are high performers get left behind." Almost every principal shared that the time factor was "to the detriment of other teachers who are performing and have needs, too." Another participant described how he wanted to spend as much time as he could in the classrooms with the teachers, especially those who are struggling. However, as the principal of a large high school, "there are only so many hours in the day." He elaborated, "I can't always be in classrooms, and I can't spend all my time trying to find professional development that is tailored for a unique need. Our system just does not allow us that luxury."

One principal indicated that the time required to work through the process, especially the documentation and paperwork, with a marginal teacher "turns a lot of principals off." Another principal described the plan of improvement as a source of "frustration," noting that the plan "takes energy and effort to do things right." Another principal indicated, "You can invest too much time in all that mess," and in many ways that curtails "my ability to really care, when I know improvement may not make any difference. The teacher could be a 'goner' who will probably not return."

**Theme 2:** *Confidentiality Trumps Collaboration.* The second theme centers on tensions related to confidentiality and the issues involving other school personnel in professional support. The tension for many was that they knew that encouraging collaboration could act as a support for teachers, but the risks were just "too high" to promote this type of assistance. All the participants addressed the issue of confidentiality. Due to the highly sensitive nature of the topic of marginal teachers, and personnel issues in general, confidentiality played a role at each step of the process. "As a leader, I can't discuss the needs of one teacher with another," expressed the prevailing thoughts of the principals.

One principal indicated that "regardless of what is said or not, everyone knows which teachers are on plans of improvement, and my hands are tied." Most principals believed that they could not

enlist the support of other teachers given the potential legalities associated with plans of improvement especially if a teacher would likely not be renewed. One principal shared, "It's a lonely world for me and for the teacher on a plan of improvement." Another principal indicated, "I stand alone, and it has to stay that way." Another principal shared a situation where a teacher was having "a really difficult time, and her colleagues wanted to help. They came to me, and I had to refuse to discuss the situation. I felt that I had to be silent." This principal elaborated, "I know that these teachers had good intentions, but to share what the teacher needed would compromise issues down the road" Furthermore, "I was told by central office not to enlist the support of others." On a personal and professional level, the principal shared, "It was very difficult, because other people would ask about it, or say things, especially parents, and you didn't want to say anything that you shouldn't, but you also knew something was really wrong."

Both System A and System B in which this study was conducted are larger, urban areas. However, one principal indicated the communities "from where our students come from are really small neighborhoods." This principal explained that confidentiality can be a problem that carries over into the community of her school, because at her school "a lot of teachers also live in this community, and socialize in this community, with the parents in this community. A lot of things from schools pill over." A majority of the principals indicated that they would not include "people" resources from within their buildings to support marginal teachers for fear of legal repercussions, the potential fall-out of other teachers in their buildings, and as a way to help the struggling teacher "save face" among peers.

There were three principals (all elementary) who did try to enlist the support of peers to help marginal teachers remediate weaknesses relayed to their instructional practices. However, they all expressed that *c*onfidentiality can be difficult to maintain when employing the help of coaches and other building personnel in assisting and

supporting a marginal teacher. One principal shared, "The team only needs to know what they need to know, but obviously, if they are helping, they know something is going on." Confidentiality comes in to play because "word spreads quickly in a school environment" when a teacher is on a plan of improvement. These three principals indicated that "it was worth the risk," "they would do everything in their power to support a marginal teacher," and that the calculated risks "make a difference" for teachers who are struggling. A majority of the participants, however, did not share these views and for them to support collaboration could, in the end according to one participant, "make a mess."

It is interesting that learning opportunities did not enlist the support of others and that many of the principals were resentful of marginal teachers who took up more time with monitoring progress eclipsing opportunities for performing teachers to have administrative attention. Confidentiality provided to be a barrier for principals to reconcile whether others should be involved with working and nurturing marginal teachers.

**Theme 3:** *Professional Development by the Numbers***.** The third theme centers on professional development for marginal teachers. To examine data about professional learning for marginal teachers, Desimone's (20111) framework (see literature section) was used as way to order data found in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3

| Framework for Effective Professional Development (Desimone. 2011) | Findings |
|---|---|
| Content Focus | Professional development content was<br>• "by the numbers" and prescriptive focusing on the "approximate" needs elaborated in plans of improvement.<br>• approximate to needs |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • deemed successful by check marks after items in the plan of improvement |
| Active Learning | Marginal teachers<br>• worked alone or only with the school leadership<br>• had no extra supports for feedback, peer observations, modeling, shadowing teachers who have more expertise, and other types of corollary supports appear to be absent<br>• "sat" in workshops offered by the central office |
| Framework for Effective Professional Development (Desimone. 2011) | Findings |
| Coherence | Professional development for marginal teachers was<br>• not tied to any school-wide effort or purposefully linked to instructional supervision<br>• was tied more to teacher evaluation |
| Duration | As soon as the plan of improvement ended so too did supports. |
| Collective participation | Marginal teachers were not encouraged or rarely offered the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers. The principal or other members of the administrative team were the safety net |

**Prescriptive Professional Development**

Given the tenor of accountability and the uses of student achievement linked to teacher performance, the participants focused more intently on connecting professional development to evaluation. Overall, principals did provide professional development for the marginal teachers they supervised on a plan of improvement; however, data points to a compliance-drive model of professional learning that was highly prescriptive based on the judgment of the principal. One participant shared that he "decided on what type of professional development was needed" and "how much and for how long." Another principal shared that she had "no qualms" or "second doubts" about "knowing what was best for the teachers based on the reasons the plan of improvement was developed."

The principals from one school system repeatedly used the word "deficits" to describe the issues that marginal teachers faced in the classroom. By extension, many of the interviews focused on the principal's role leading "deficit-based" professional learning opportunities. One of the middle school principals indicated that he "would occasionally consult with others" when deciding what professional development was appropriate; however, he was "the final word" on all matters to teachers who had to "ultimately own their issues." Overwhelmingly, the principals shared similar sentiments about "assigning professional development" on the "needs of the building, the needs of students, and the requirements of the curricular program."

**Providers of Professional Development**

According to the principals in this study, professional development for marginal teachers rarely occurred in-house with direct assistance provided by school personnel. When asked, the principals produced "menus of professional development" offered at the district level. When asked about "site-level" professional development for marginal teachers, several perspectives were shared.

One principal indicated that if a marginal teacher was in the "first-year of teaching," the teacher could "consult with a mentor," but the "initiation" would need to come from the marginal teacher. All participants indicated a reluctance to engage others at the "file and rank" of teachers at the site in any matters related to marginal teaching except in the instances where marginal teachers at the beginning of their careers could consult with a mentor. At the high school level, department chairs were not typically asked to work with struggling department members, but they shared that "teachers could consult with their department chairs." The elementary principals across these two systems referenced that they had occasionally assigned either a math or literacy coach to work with "marginal teachers more" but "document [the] time" with these teachers.

## Discussion

The literature about professional development paints a strong portraiture of learning that should extend over time (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011); be continuous, ongoing, and include follow-up opportunities (Darling-Hammond & Falk, 2013); embedded within the workday and relevant to the teacher's needs (Zepeda, 2015); content and grade specific (Desimone, 2011); and promotes collaboration, brainstorming, reflection, and inquiry (Timperley, 2008). Moreover, Desimone (2011) advocates for coherence to connect all learning supports, and Zepeda (2016, 2017) is resolute that instructional supervision, teacher evaluation, and professional development must be unified in purposes and intents—teacher growth and development. Unfortunately, these notions were absent from the interviews with this group of principals.

As an instructional leader, the principal is responsible for hiring and retaining teachers and that includes being the leader of professional learning. The 12 principals who agreed to be interviewed all had experience working with marginal teachers. It is interesting that professional development for marginal teachers was

viewed as a deficit proposition, the teachers were broken, and their deficits could be fixed through the remediation offered through professional development as initiated in formal plans of improvement. Absent also was discussion about teachers as adult learners that could learn from job-embedded professional development where teachers could learn from their work. The findings of this study must be balanced in that the teachers that the participants spoke about were ones who were having difficulties in the classroom. However, the needs of marginal teachers are of paramount importance. Perhaps a limitation of this study was that the researcher did not probe the principals to think about a single instance of a marginal teacher.

As a whole, this group of school leaders knew that marginal teachers needed a specialized, more intensive support system; however, the approaches that the leaders took with this population of teachers appears to be one of estrangement and exclusion from working with others in the buildings. It appears that the accountability context was forcing professional development to be a compliance-driven system with a menu of district-wide learning opportunities. A notable finding is that the principals delegated professional development more to the system level. Principals distanced marginal teachers from direct support from within the buildings with the exception of literacy or math coaches at the elementary schools. Professional development consistent with only what was available and not necessarily tied to individual needs appeared to be the norm for working with marginal teachers. As a researcher, I was struck by one comment about marginal teachers: "If they fail, I feel like I have failed."

## Implications

Professional development must not be viewed as a quick-fix to support the improvement of teachers who have marginal practices. Professional development for marginal teachers must go beyond

being viewed as a deficit model and avoid becoming a professional development compliancy model where opportunities to grow are only a part of a check-list. Professional learning must become personalized complementing what we know about developmental (Glickman et al., 2014) and differentiated (Glatthorn, 1997) supervision. Professional development for marginal teachers needs to include site-level supports that go beyond the assistance from school leaders. New ways of teacher collaboration (e.g., collaborative planning), uses of technology (e.g., chat rooms for teachers), and teacher leaders (e.g., peer coaches, mentors) can and should be part of the safety-net for a vulnerable population of teachers.

The perspectives of the principals were important, but the sample size was small. This research presents one way of examining issues about professional development for marginal teachers on plans of improvement. However, given the issues of confidentiality, the research community needs to think through more rigorous ways of exploring this and other areas with school leaders. Clearly, the interview process in this study had limitations one being the inability to audio-record.

Perhaps, a next area to research is to figure out a way to interview teachers who have been on a formal plan of improvement. However, it is unlikely that a group of teachers whether or not that they are on a plan of improvement, they have been released from a plan of improvement, or they have been non-renewed could be assembled. With the proliferation of on-line groups, perhaps this could potentially be a way for teachers to self-identify without full disclosure of their circumstances, identities, etc. The work of leaders with teachers who need extra support will continue given the complexities in which teachers work, and to this end, schools need leaders who can champion this type of work.

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# Higher Education Administration, and Leadership: Current Assumptions, Responsibilities, and Considerations

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**Abstract**

*This article profiles the evolving role of educational administrators and leaders in higher education. Four guiding assumptions for leaders are presented related to social impact, community engagement, labor market success, and institutional stability. Then, seven key administration and leadership responsibilities are described. They include planning, academic entrepreneurship, data-driven decision making, revenue generation, creating professional and academic pathways for learners, curriculum development, and business development and marketing. This is followed by a set of pragmatic considerations that higher education administrators and leaders may consider in their professional practices. The considerations provide a framework for interrogating leadership assumptions and responsibilities, a framework that can be applied to analyze additional responsibilities as they emerge in relation to the assumptions that accompany them. The considerations pose intended and unintended possibilities for leaders to use to inform decision making, maintain principled leadership practices, and to challenge unexamined beliefs and values.*

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## Introduction

The educational administration and leadership literature is replete with descriptions of how leaders should develop their capacity to understand and manage change (Lieberman, 2005). A corresponding plethora of educational leadership theories has emerged in recent decades to inform leaders who are grappling with a multitude of change forces (Leithwood, 2007). Similarly, much-needed recommendations have been proposed for managing change from K-12 educational settings (Conway & Andrews, 2016) through higher education (Razik & Swanson, 2010). Indeed, educational leaders worldwide and at all levels are engaged in ongoing efforts to understand and address some of the major factors affecting their work, for example, reduced government funding, contested visions of the purpose of education, increasing accountability frameworks, and preparation for life in post-industrial economies (Scott & Dixon, 2008).

The purpose of this article is to profile the evolving role of educational administrators and leaders in higher education. First, a set of guiding assumptions for leadership practices will be posited. Then, seven key administration and leadership responsibilities will be described, followed by a series of considerations that relate directly to those assumptions and responsibilities.

## Guiding Assumptions

This article on the roles and responsibilities of educational administrators in higher education is based on several assumptions. First, educational leaders in the tertiary sector should seek to establish "engaged campus[es]" (McRae, 2012, p. 2) that connect with individuals and organizations in the communities they serve. Engagement may be manifested, for example, in the form of networking, service learning, policy development, and responsive programming (McRae, 2012). Second, a reasonable and defensible goal of higher education is to meet the needs of learners to access

education and training in order to increase their success in the workplace (Adamuti-Trache & Schuetze, 2009). Third, educational administrators must understand that their capacity to support social and economic growth, scholarly inquiry, and enhanced capacity for learners to participate in a civil society is dependent upon their institutions' financial stability (Alstete, 2014). However, the creation of educational programs that facilitate individuals' social and career success is not mutually exclusive from programming that generates institutional revenue (Scott & Webber, 2013). Revenue generating programming that enhances social capital may include "noncredit courses and programs, degree completion and upgrades, branch campuses, distance education, off-campus activities, alliances and joint ventures, and study abroad" (Alstete, 2014, p. 6). Fourth, educational administrators should rally around planning and practices that "focus strategically on creating short-and long-term opportunities for learning that will make a significant difference for individuals and their societies" (Webber & Scott, 2008, para 16).

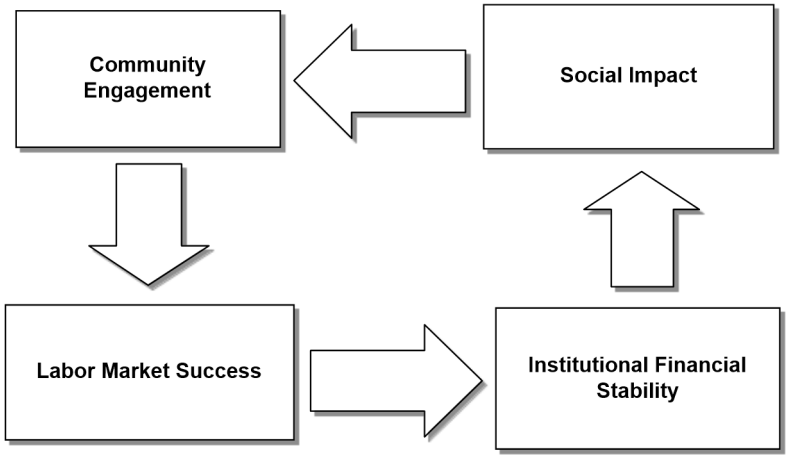


Figure 1. *Guiding assumptions.*

The four assumptions contained in Figure 1 are offered with full recognition of the contested nature of education for employment, the purported dominance in higher education of neoliberal agendas, perceived dangers of globalization and capitalism, forecasts of reductions to faculty power and control, and the vulnerability of social justice initiatives (see, for example, Bottery, 2003; Eastman, 2006; Gunter & Forrester, 2009).

Nonetheless, this article utilizes a pragmatic approach (Malachowski, 2010) to understanding educational administration and leadership, and seeks to address the widespread need for higher education leaders to adapt responsibly, quickly, and successfully to the current state of flux in social and economic structures (Razik & Swanson, 2010). As Rothblatt (2012, p. 15) stated, "The future isn't waiting," and educational leaders have little choice but to engage in leading and managing change. It is important to note, however, that the challenges associated with change management can be daunting within a higher education context that "is an essentially conservative enterprise" (Kamenetz, 2010, p. xiii) and where the results of change initiatives are unpredictable.

## Leadership Responsibilities

Leaders in higher education seek to fulfill a range of responsibilities that are relatively consistent across diverse forms of institutional structures—community colleges, polytechnics, universities, vocational and trade schools, academies, and continuing education organizations—although the particularities of the responsibilities will vary according to the organizational type and purpose. Further layers of complexity relate to organizational attributes such as for-profit mandates, geographic focus, e-learning, and internationalization. For the purposes of this article, what follows is restricted to a discussion of the leadership responsibilities of planning, academic entrepreneurship, data-driven decision making,

revenue generation, and creating professional and academic pathways for learners.

**Planning**

Given the continuously evolving sociopolitical context of higher education, it is possible for institutions to lose their focus in an attempt to be all things to all people. To avoid a vague focus, educational leaders need to engage the members of their communities in careful strategic and academic planning activities (see Hinton, 2012; Rowley & Sherman, 2004) that are sufficiently coherent to guide decision-making, yet flexible enough to permit institutional agility.

Essential elements in the establishment of organizational focus, whether at the unit or institutional level, include (1) a clear mission statement, (2) guiding principles and goals, and (3) high-level priorities, with accompanying objectives and strategies. The process of establishing the planning components is nonlinear and fraught with the possibility of losing the commitment of important stakeholders. Therefore, leaders should approach the planning task in stages that include establishment of a planning committee comprised of key members, a strategic planning needs assessment, a comprehensive environmental scan, iterative consultation procedures that invite contributions from important internal and external stakeholders, and repeated sharing of planning document drafts.

There is a need for a second level of planning that is based on unit-wide goals and principles and detailed enough to guide financial and human resource allocation, program development priorities, staffing plans, and the establishment of progress metrics. Whatever the descriptor—academic plan, action plan, or work plan-- important components of the finer-grained plan include alignment to the strategic goals and priorities, allocation of unit responsibility, identification of responsible personnel, actions needed, timelines, necessary resources, and success metrics. Ideally completed on an

annual basis, the detailed work plans are intended to keep day-to-day operations clear and focused.

A multitude of risks is associated with the planning process. They include the past experiences of organizational members, including personal and group successes and perceived slights, which affect individuals' capacity to contribute constructively to planning discussions. Changes in formal senior leadership levels at the institutional level can support or, alternatively, derail planning procedures. Failure to align unit and organizational planning procedures and materials can result in incoherent foci throughout the institution. Dramatic, unanticipated modifications to funding or revenue streams can reshape organizational goals. Similarly, unanticipated collective bargaining obstacles or emergent labor disputes may contribute to the success or failure of planning activities.

**Academic Entrepreneurship**

Academic entrepreneurship normally is associated with the commercialization of university teaching and research to generate revenue streams for postsecondary institutions (Siegel & Wright, 2015). However, it has evolved to include "academic publishing, grant seeking and contract research, which are far more acceptable for the academic culture" (Cantaragu, 2012, p. 686). A broader and inclusive definition of academic entrepreneurship was offered by Cantaragu, 2012, p. 687):

> Academic entrepreneurship is a practice performed with the intention to transfer knowledge between the university and the external environment in order to produce economic and social value both for external actors and for members of the academia, and in which at least a member of academia maintains a primary role.

The topic of academic entrepreneurship continues to generate tensions between some stakeholders who believe that postsecondary institutions should focus exclusively on learning for its own sake and

others who understand revenue generation as something that benefits the entire institution (Alstete, 2014; Eastman, 2006).

Nonetheless, there is ongoing recognition that academic entrepreneurship is a viable element in the context of higher education leadership. For example, Scott and Webber (2013) proposed six components of academic entrepreneurship. The first component was innovative behavior which is characterized by the generation of knowledge and skills, high levels of social and political acumen, and well-developed change-management technical skills. A second component was strong networking skills resulting in successful adaptation to change and successful acquisition of decision-making information. The third element of leaders' academic entrepreneurship capacity was a clear framework for time-space communication that allowed both synchronous and asynchronous communication, plus local and distributed communication, and learning across space and through time. The fourth element was a local-global leadership perspective characterized by cultural literacy, plus principled and socially responsive decision-making. The fifth element was an understanding of educational organizations as knowledge centers where learners, educators, and support staff are engaged in productive community outreach. The final element of academic entrepreneurship was an integrated face-to-face and internet-based learning framework that facilitated successful participation in strategic alliances in competitive local, national, and international settings. Scott and Webber (2013) cautioned that academic entrepreneurship is a "fragile construct in its conceptualization, manifestation, and sustainability…[It should equip educational leaders to] demonstrate entrepreneurship and to avoid the temptation to be satisfied with the status quo when the status quo no longer serves the best interest of learners and their societies" (p. 132).

**Data-Driven Decision Making**

There are several areas responsibility for educational administrators and leaders in higher education in terms of basing their decision making on data. First, a high level focus should be on ongoing environmental scans and market analyses that allow leaders to identify social trends and behavior patterns within the local service area and in national and international contexts. Information such as this can be derived, for example, from digital media monitoring, professional networking, examination of competitors' programming, forecasting by financial institutions and business organizations, projected government policy formulation, and court decisions that affect education and training. Data from all of the sources may indicate the decline of some educational markets and the emergence of new ones.

A second level of online data gathering is possible. Shaping and monitoring the digital and media presence of people and programming related to leaders' institutional units provide timely evidence of the perceptions that members of the local and larger communities have of educational services. Further, digital tracking of learner and organizational access to the educational unit's websites can provide valuable information about online marketing success, learner demographics, and registration trends.

Fine-grained data can be garnered through a multitude of sources, including student evaluations of instructors, learner profiles, enrolment preferences, graduate surveys, fee payment patterns, learner referrals, learner satisfaction surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, public and private sector affiliations of students, and detailed tracking of revenues-expenses-net returns. Additional data can be derived from careful risk-management analyses, documentation of strategic alliances, longitudinal productivity of partnerships with professional and corporate organizations, utility of legal templates for employee contracts and institutional partnerships, and response patterns to requests for proposals.

In addition, a marker of the success of leadership in higher education organizations is provided by the levels and types of feedback from affiliated internal and external individuals and units. Eubanks, et al. (2010) advised assessing the nature of criticism in terms of its levels of logic and emotion. They also suggested that valuable information can result from analyzing the responses of others to leaders' behaviors in terms of increased or decreased commitment. That is, response strategies of collaboration and persuasion, Eubanks, et al. (2010) noted, were positively related to overall commitment but, interestingly, so too was confrontation as a response strategy if it removed obstacles and allowed the change agenda to proceed successfully. Monitoring reactions to organizational change also facilitate decision making regarding, for example, individuals' change readiness, tolerance for ambiguity, and openness to change (Oreg, Vakola, & Armenakis, 2011). It is important to note that some level of criticism is inevitable for higher education leaders, for example, during times of significant change, when well established groups within an institution encounter a leader from outside, or after the appointment of a leader from an underrepresented group (see, for example, Gunsalus, 2006; Hannum, Muhly, Shockley-Zalabak, & White, 2015; Twale & De Luca, 2008)

An important aspect of data-based decision-making is ease of analysis. Data-gathering plans should be developed carefully so that evidence can be analyzed quickly, comprehensively, and accurately. Data that cannot be analyzed and utilized in a timely manner are wasted and the resources expended to gather it could have been applied better elsewhere within the organization.

Useful data can inform long-term planning, target emergent educational needs and markets, increase institutional competitiveness, maximize benefits for learners, and maintain the sustainability of educational organizations. Importantly, accurate and timely data can be applied quickly to the development of a micro-business plan for each and every initiative that an educational unit

undertakes, something that is essential for educational administrators and leaders in the 21st century.

**Revenue Generation**

Although revenue generation is a subset of academic entrepreneurship, it is sufficiently under-described in the educational leadership literature so as to merit attention on its own. Revenue generation in postsecondary institutions is a controversial topic and debates continue about the capacity of higher education, especially continuing education units, to fulfill their mandates to generate revenue while concurrently offering socially responsive programming (McRae, 2012). It is unlikely that there will be a quick resolution to the tensions between proponents of revenue generation and defenders of higher education as primarily or even exclusively government funded organizations. Indeed, the most likely outcome for the foreseeable future may be ongoing dependence of tertiary education on government funding but with increasing capacity to expand revenue generation activities in order to fund teaching and research priorities.

In the meantime, it may be useful for higher education leaders to interrogate the range of beliefs about revenue generation that exists within the academy. There is a dominant belief, perhaps stronger in universities and community colleges than other postsecondary institutions, that higher education should be dedicated primarily to the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and that allocation of time and energy to revenue generation is a diversion from the primary purpose of postsecondary institutions. There is a corresponding belief that educational leaders will encounter, or even hold themselves, that higher education is a public good and, therefore, should be funded publicly. From that perspective, frequently tied to political beliefs about the role of government, revenue generation or commercialization within a public institution, such as a university or college, is perceived to be counter to the basic function of the

institution. It is germane to note also that most instructors and even higher education leaders have had limited opportunities to develop business acumen relating to, for example, market analyses, budget development, marketing planning, or revenue-expense-net return calculations. Rather, their experience and skill set both are primarily consistent with their roles as educational service providers.

Educational administrators and leaders will encounter the argument that that higher education currently provides opportunities for social mobility for individuals from lower socioeconomic strata (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007). However, examination of the current postsecondary system suggests that universities may in fact "have a role in the reproduction of inequality in society" (McLean, 2007, p. 79). In other words, parental education and income levels are strong indicators of whether learners will attend higher educational institutions and then graduate. Therefore, as counterintuitive as it may seem, revenue-generating educational programming and pathways to professional and academic credentials, particularly those offered in alternative formats and times to nontraditional students, actually may increase access to higher education and facilitate social mobility.

It should be noted that one area of broader acceptance among higher education personnel is fund development. Most postsecondary institutions have fund development offices whose staff members cultivate and steward donors, typically in pursuit of funding for instructional and research centers, and for major capital projects.

**Pathways to Professional and Academic Growth**

The route through higher education traditionally has been perceived by many to be graduation from high school followed by progression through a 2-to-4 year certificate, diploma, or degree program. Continuation to a second academic credential, such as a professional or graduate degree, is expected to follow for smaller

numbers of learners. However, there is increasing recognition of "the needs of learners to customize their educational pathways to accommodate careers and family life" (Adamuti-Tache & Schuetze, 2009). As a result, higher education leaders are expected to lead the development of pathways to learning for individuals with diverse needs.

The availability of academic pathways is a major attractor for domestic and international learners (ICEF & Barton Carlyle, 2016; Walker & Dimmock, 2004). Global migration patterns have resulted in learners seeking access to higher education while bringing academic experiences that challenge admission policies and practices that were designed to meet the needs of domestic students. Nontraditional learners may need to participate in programming designed to prepare them for the obstacles associated with studying in a new culture. In addition, pathways through English language acquisition and academic upgrading courses may be needed to qualify for admission to higher education. Indeed, academic pathways are crucial elements in the success of learners who study on campus or who arrive after participating in transnational programs where they complete part of their programs in their home countries.

Other learners come to higher education with different expectations based on their learning needs as women or members of First Nations, for example. Leaders in postsecondary institutions seeking to fulfill their social impact mandate understand that such learners, plus others seeking career transitions or educational access from rural and remote communities, require access to program structures such as accelerated programming and recognition of prior learning (e.g., Conrad, 2008). Nontraditional learners also benefit from innovative scheduling and programming such as joint or combined programs, dual credit offerings, open admission, customized scheduling, and ease of credit transfer. Similarly, postsecondary leaders should support instructional design innovation—flipped classrooms, MOOC-like programming, blended

and online courses—that actively engage learners and assist them to establish lifelong learning networks.

In addition, nontraditional learners require supports that facilitate their efforts to succeed academically and professionally. For example, they benefit from academic advising that accommodates their experience as adult learners, plus access to campus and online writing centers and library support services.

Postsecondary leaders also need to act as change agents that challenge barriers to learning. For example, long-standing institutional residency requirements are obstacles to credit transfer and degree completion. Instructors may need professional development related to working with increasingly diverse student populations who may not share the cultural assumptions and beliefs that are dominant in Western educational cultures. Attending to creating a learning environment conducive to learner success has the potential to address all of the guiding assumptions highlighted earlier in this article, that is, to maximize social impact, increase community engagement, assist with labor market success, and achieve institutional financial stability.

**Curriculum Development**

Higher education curriculum development can take several forms. Programs may be undergraduate or graduate degrees in the arts and sciences where curricular authority resides in the first instance with faculty members, chairs and deans, subject to approval by a university-wide academic program committee and ratification by an institutional senate or general faculty council. Consultation is expected throughout the curriculum approval process with relevant institutional groups such as the budget committee, library, other teaching units offering feeder courses, and more. In most North American contexts, degrees must be considered by provincial or state authorities who review program proposals from institutions to ensure they satisfy quality expectations, can be resourced, and satisfy

educational market demands. In the case of professional degrees in areas such as nursing, education, social work, and engineering, for example, external accrediting associations also must approve program proposals. There are institutional variances in the approval process, depending upon the type of governance structure in place, bicameral or otherwise, but these are the types of procedures that higher education leaders must navigate for credit programs. The planning and approval process can last as long as one to four years before new or significantly redesigned programs can be delivered.

Once a degree program has been approved for delivery, the program components—face-to-face and online courses, practica, independent study, field schools, research theses—are designed and developed by individual faculty members prior to being approved by a department or faculty-wide curriculum committee, department heads, chairs, associate deans, or deans, depending upon how the development process has been established within a particular unit. Intellectual property ownership typically resides with the individual faculty members who develop course content but, in most academic units, faculty members share course materials according to their annual teaching assignments and, over time, course content becomes perceived by department members as communal property. It is possible for faculty members to refuse to share their course materials and, though this does happen, it is a rare occurrence. During the course development process, faculty members may be provided with assistance from instructional designers in a centralized unit but often individual faculty members are left to develop courses on their own, occasionally with teaching release time granted but more often not. Currently, most course developers utilize learning management software licensed by their institutions, whether courses are planned for online, blended, or face-to-face delivery.

Other curriculum development occurs for the purpose of community outreach, described most often as continuing education but also as professional development or continuing studies. Course and program development most often occurs much more rapidly

than in the context of degrees. Development may be the result of a request for services from an external professional association, a corporate client, or a community organization. It also may emerge from invitations by national and international organizations to submit a proposal for one time or ongoing instructional contracts. Curriculum development may result from market analyses conducted by internal institutional staff members.

Approval processes for continuing education or professional development initiatives usually are conducted far more quickly than is the case for undergraduate or graduate programs. The process most often includes a needs assessment or market analysis, development of a draft business plan to assess financial viability, approval by a curriculum committee within a continuing education or professional development unit, consideration by a department head or chair in a related academic department, and oversight from a central institutional administrator such as a provost or vice president. A decision to proceed can be made within two to four weeks which makes response times fast and external contractors can proceed with the learning opportunities that they or their members require. The development process within the continuing education or professional development unit most often is overseen by a project coordinator who contracts an external subject matter expert to provide the relevant content, with the support of an instructional design team. The development contract usually assigns copyright to the institution rather than to the subject matter expert who is paid to do the work.

Once courses are developed, part-time instructors are contracted and delivery can commence. Even when a full program, consisting of several courses, is requested by an external professional association, delivery can begin on the first parts of the program with remaining components continuing to be developed. This or a similar approval and development process is used by most continuing education and professional development units, whether delivery is intended to be on campus, off-site in local or international settings, or in a blended or fully online format.

Salient considerations that postsecondary leaders must address during the development of degree and continuing education programming include widely differing approval and development timelines, plus different intellectual property ownership arrangements. Financial viability and sustainability are important considerations in all cases but continuing education and professional development initiatives normally are expected to be fully self-supporting. In other words, most continuing education curriculum development is not subsidized while curriculum development for degree programs are supported in most institutions, although self-supporting degree programs are becoming more common in North America.

**Business Development and Marketing**

As the need for revenue generation has gained prominence within higher education and as institutional competitiveness has grown, members of business development and marketing teams have become essential to the success of educational units. Indeed, it is not uncommon to see business development and marketing staff embedded within postsecondary schools and faculties so that they can be intimately familiar with program design, understand target audiences, and promote the unique contributions of particular programs.

Higher education administrators and leaders understand that the digital presence of every instructional department within the institution now is a major determinant of its competitiveness and longitudinal success. How programs and the people delivering them are portrayed on institutional websites and in social media affects the choices that learners make in an era when they have worldwide choices. Moreover, the digital profiling of institutions is a far greater factor in students' decision to register than the factors affecting those decisions in the past, such as print calendars, magazine and newspaper advertising, recruitment fairs, and open houses.

Business development and marketing staff can contribute in a host of other ways to program success. For instance, they serve as liaisons to representatives of government international trade departments. They schedule video and audio conferences with personnel in the offices of international trade commissioners and consulates in order to assess international revenue generating instructional and training initiatives. They design the programming units' websites and use their communication knowledge to attract and direct potential learners to online registration sites. They design, gather, and analyze data, described earlier in this article, so others within their schools and faculties can make well-informed decisions. They also use those data to prepare colleagues for meetings within the institution and the external community, including national and international meetings.

In addition, business development and marketing team members monitor their units' digital presence in order to discern response patterns to their marketing and to that of competitors. They advise in cases of cyber bullying and ensure compliance of all digital and print communications with privacy legislation. In short, business development personnel have become as essential to the success of postsecondary institutions and their individual units as the faculty members, instructional designers, financial staff, librarians, and support services members.

## Leadership Considerations

Table 1 below summarizes some of the pragmatic considerations that higher education administrators and leaders may consider in the context of their professional practices. The responsibilities listed are not all-encompassing and they will vary in their applicability to leaders' organizational milieus. Similarly, the four guiding assumptions are examples of the multiple assumptions that may apply to different higher education workplaces.

Table 1. *Leadership Considerations*

| Responsibilities | Social Impact | Community Engagement | Labor Market Success | Institutional Financial Stability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Planning** | What is our mission?<br>What principles guide us?<br>Who benefits?<br>What are the risks?<br>What aspects are contested? | Who should have a say?<br>Who has been excluded?<br>Who wants us to do this?<br>Why? | What are labor market needs?<br>Is professional accreditation needed?<br>What is the future?<br>Who else is doing this work? | Are market analysis data available?<br>Who are our competitors?<br>Who are collaborators?<br>Can we do this?<br>What will this work replace? |
| **2. Academic Entrepreneurship** | Which individuals benefit?<br>Does the community benefit?<br>Who does not want this? Why?<br>What are unintended consequences? | Will this increase capacity?<br>Will anyone be harmed?<br>Is there readiness? | Is there a niche?<br>Are skills and knowledge transferable?<br>Is there economic value?<br>Does this disrupt? What? | Is there a market?<br>Does the ROI warrant investment?<br>Can others do it better? |
| **3. Data-Driven Decision Making** | Are passive data available?<br>Will data-gathering threaten?<br>Will data-gathering intrude? | Are there data-gathering partners?<br>What are the effects?<br>Who is upset? Why? | What are success indicators?<br>What is the growth potential?<br>What are longitudinal patterns? | What data are needed?<br>What are our costs?<br>Can ongoing data be analyzed efficiently?<br>What are the risks? |
| **4. Revenue Generation** | How is this controversial?<br>Is there strong opposition?<br>From whom?<br>How widespread is the need? | Are there potential collaborators?<br>What opportunities are created?<br>Whose values will be challenged? Why? | Who is the target market?<br>What is the value for participants? | What is the revenue-expense ratio?<br>Can we afford the talent to deliver?<br>How long till an ROI? |
| **5. Pathways to Professional and Academic Growth** | Who will access pathways?<br>Who cannot access pathways? Why not?<br>Is that okay? | Will participants have greater capacity?<br>How will others benefit?<br>What barriers will be removed? | Is work available?<br>What is the anticipated quality of life outcome? | Are pathways sustainable?<br>Are partners committed? |
| **6. Curriculum Development** | What is the effect on the institution?<br>What is the impact on other programs?<br>Opportunities for learners? | Are colleagues supportive?<br>How can other units contribute?<br>Effects on other institutions?<br>Subsidization requirements? | Is curriculum stable?<br>What are imminent changes in the field?<br>What is the development timeline? | Are developers available?<br>Instructors?<br>What are the resource requirements?<br>Who owns content? |
| **7. Business Development and Marketing** | Who needs to know?<br>What information to share?<br>When?<br>Risks? | What information sharing tools areavailable?<br>What legislation applies? | What is unique?<br>Who locally and beyond needs to know?<br>What is the best way to inform? | Is our digital presence sustainable?<br>Can success be monitored? |

Nonetheless, the considerations in Table 1 provide a framework for interrogating leadership assumptions and responsibilities, a framework that can be applied to analyze additional responsibilities as they emerge in relation to the assumptions that accompany them. The considerations are not intended to obfuscate or to instill self-doubt. Rather, they pose intended and unintended possibilities for leaders to use on their own and with their colleagues to inform decision-making, maintain principled leadership practices, and to challenge that which appears to be obvious.

## Conclusion

Several years ago, I suggested possible futures for postsecondary institutions in the West (Webber, 2008). I predicted that universities would gravitate primarily toward four dominant typologies. The first type was represented by long-standing niche universities that deliver well regarded small campus-based programs and enjoy strong support from members of their local and national communities. Such institutions risked declining influence in the face of globalized competition for students, faculty members, and financial resources. A second predicted category was comprised of new start-up universities offering regional programming to appreciative local communities by place-bound or early-career faculty members. Often with roots as a community college, start-up universities are vulnerable to recruitment of students and faculty members by competing institutions. The third proposed category was comprised of distance and international organizations that were founded on revenue-generating principles, open admission policies, and market-focused programming. I suggested that such distance and internationally-oriented universities constituted a growth domain but risked longer term academic credibility because teaching was less research-based and more market-driven. The fourth typology in my proposed future consisted of top-tier, sometimes centuries old, research intensive universities featured near the top of world university rankings.

I then drew upon both business (e.g., Lester & Parnell, 2006; Lin, Hoffman, & Thurston, 2004) and educational literature (e.g., Beaulieu, 2005; Dennison & Schuetze, 2004; Schuetze & Bruneau, 2004) to suggest that postsecondary institutions seeking longer term stability

ought to consider a balanced educational portfolio. Universities with a balanced portfolio would maintain a relative equilibrium between practice and research-oriented programming. To clarify, balanced educational portfolios concurrently focus on market relevance, quality scholarship, and professionally-oriented teaching. They also build on traditional revenue sources, such as government funding and donor resources, by offering revenue-generating programming designed to meet the needs of the educational marketplace.

Since 2008, when I offered my predictions for university typologies, the pace of change within tertiary education has accelerated. For example, recognition of the need to incorporate technology into teaching and learning has solidified (Black, 2010; Morris, 2016). Societies increasingly agree that educational access could be considered a basic human right (Dhillon, 2011). Leaders in both public and private sectors are expected to manifest greater and more sophisticated understandings of cultural differences (Hernandez & Kose, 2012). There is a widely shared hope that increasing access to formal educational credentials will address social, cultural, financial, and gender-related inequities manifested in the context of a postindustrial society (Buchmann & Malti, 2012).

In short, my suggestions in 2008 that a balanced educational portfolio should include concurrent foci on practice-based and scholarship-oriented programming, funded by both government and entrepreneurial revenue streams, may be even more relevant in 2016. There is perhaps a greater urgency for educational administrators in the postsecondary sector to focus on understanding the assumptions guiding their practice and on fulfilling their professional responsibilities, while carefully considering the intended and unintended outcomes of their work.

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# Comparison and Evaluation of Four Models of Teacher Leadership

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**Abstract**

*The purpose of this quantitative study was to employ confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to compare the four-factor model of teacher leadership with three alternative models. The alternative models of teacher leadership include: (a) a two-factor model investigating teacher leadership as teacher-driven and principal-driven factors, (b) a three-factor model of teacher-driven factors of teacher leadership, and (c) a five-factor model in which a factor from the four factor model is split into two separate factors. While the fit indices indicated that the three-factor model provided the best model fit for the data used in this study, evaluation of CFA models of the strength and interpretability of the parameter estimates demonstrated that the four-factor model provides a better representation of teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership in a school. Though focused on the four-factor model of teacher leadership, this study filled a theoretical gap by examining educational leadership through the lens of teacher as the cornerstone.*

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## Introduction

Studies have documented the influence that effective school leadership has on both the achievement of students and the effectiveness of schools (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Murphy & Hallinger, 1988). As the notion of school leadership has expanded to include teachers, research has also expanded into an examination of the influence of teacher leadership on school improvement. Teacher leaders "lead within and beyond the classroom, influence others toward improved educational practice, and identify with and contribute to a community of teacher leaders" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001, p. 6). Current research indicates that teacher leadership has a direct positive effect on school improvement, school effectiveness, and teacher morale (Frost & Harris, 2003; Gronn, 2000; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). However, in their review of the research on teacher leadership, Harris and Muijs (2002) noted that, while there is substantial evidence of the beneficial effects of teacher leadership, there is little research on the nature of teacher leadership, adding that there is a need for both empirical evidence of teacher leadership in action and for different models of teacher leadership.

A review of the literature revealed that only two instruments have been used to measure teacher leadership prior to 2009. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) measured teacher leadership with three items from the 142-item Organizational Conditions and School Leadership Survey. The only other instrument to measure teacher leadership was one proposed in a thesis as part of a master's degree program (Triska, 2007). Likewise, while some authors have applied existing models of leadership to the work done by teacher leaders (e.g., Keung, 2009; Webb, Neumann, & Jones, 2004), there have been very few models developed which apply specifically to teacher leadership. In 2008, Angelle, Taylor, and Olivier developed the 25-item Teacher Leadership Inventory (TLI) measuring teacher leadership. Using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, the instrument was

pared to 17 items and a four-factor model of teacher leadership was developed from the TLI. The purpose of this quantitative study is to employ confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to compare the four-factor model of teacher leadership with three alternative models. The alternative models of teacher leadership include: (a) a two-factor model investigating teacher leadership as teacher-driven and principal-driven factors, (b) a three-factor model of teacher-driven factors of teacher leadership, and (c) a five-factor model in which a factor from the original study is split into two separate factors.

This examination and comparison of models has implications for education and educational leadership. First, the models in question include both formal and informal roles of teacher leadership; prior measurements of teacher leadership generally only included formal roles appointed by the principal or other administrators. Second, a model of teacher leadership supported by sound research can be used by district and school leaders to gauge the extent of leadership among a school's faculty. Finally, this study has implications for future research as a valid and reliable instrument supported by statistical tests that can be used in further educational studies.

## Conceptual Framework

Because this study is intended to explore the concept of teacher leadership, the four-factor model of teacher leadership proposed by Angelle and DeHart (2010) and based upon prior research (Angelle & Beaumont, 2006; Angelle et al., 2008) served as a conceptual framework. A preliminary depiction of the four-factor model of teacher leadership is shown in Figure 1.

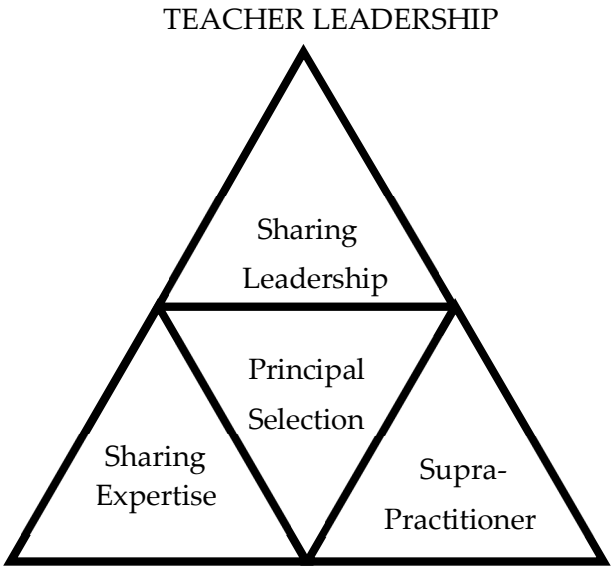


Figure 1. *The four-factor model of teacher leadership*

The first factor, Sharing Expertise (SE), focuses on the perceptions of teachers' pedagogical and classroom management skills as well as their willingness to share those skills with their fellow teachers. The second factor, Sharing Leadership (SL), describes a reciprocal relationship existing between the principal and the teachers in a school. This factor is composed of two sub-factors: Leadership Opportunities (SLO) and Leadership Engagement (SLE). The first sub-factor depends upon a principal's attitude toward offering opportunities for teachers to engage in leadership practices, while the second sub-factor reflects teachers' inclination to take on leadership responsibilities. The perceptions of teachers' willingness to go above and beyond their prescribed roles are indicated by the third factor, Supra-Practitioner (SP). The final factor, Principal Selection (PS), measures the teachers' perceptions that the principal controls which teachers may participate in leadership activities.

## Review of the Literature

Teacher leadership has changed over the past three decades. Silva, Gimbert, and Nolan (2000) described the evolution of teacher leadership as occurring in three waves. During the first wave in the early 1980s, teacher leadership was focused on formal roles such as department head or grade level chair (Little, 2003; Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). While these roles provided teachers with leadership opportunities, they were not designed to allow teachers to make significant changes to a school's instructional effectiveness (Evans, 1996; Silva et al., 2000; Wasley, 1991). During the second wave of reform beginning in the mid-1980s, teacher leadership roles sought to take advantage of the instructional knowledge of teachers, and positions such as curriculum developer and teacher mentor were established (Hart, 1995; Silva et al., 2000). Although these types of leadership positions focused more on the pedagogical than the managerial expertise of teachers, they were still fringe leadership positions without true authority (Wiggenton, 1992). The third wave of teacher leadership began in the late 1980s and early 1990s and continues today as an emphasis on collegiality, collaboration, and continuous learning (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Devaney, 1987; Lieberman, 1988; Little, 1988; Silva et al., 2000).

Like other forms of leadership, teacher leadership has been defined in many ways (see Table 1). Researchers have defined teacher leadership according to the teachers' influence on school culture (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001), their collaborative efforts (Lambert, 1998), their actions within their own classroom (Youitt, 2007), and their actions outside of classrooms (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).In identifying teacher leadership, O'Connor and Boles (1992) identified specific leadership competencies including understanding politics, communication skills, and ability to change among others. Teacher leadership has also been connected to other leadership theories including instructional and participative leadership, leadership as an organizational phenomenon (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995), distributed leadership (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001), and parallel

leadership (Crowther et al., 2002). One commonality present in all of the definitions reviewed above is that leadership in a school does not have to be instilled in a single person but rather can be dispersed and shared with all school staff. In discussing instructional leadership, Pellicer and Anderson (1995) supported this concept by stating that leadership "does not necessarily begin and end with the principal. Rather, instructional leadership must come from teachers if schools are to improve and teaching is to achieve professional status" (p. 16).

Table 1.

*Definitions of Teacher Leadership.*

| Author | Definition - Teacher leadership is: |
|---|---|
| Boles & Troen (1994) | "a collective form of leadership assumed by many individuals" in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively. (p. 19) |
| Childs-Bowen, Moller & Scrivner (2000) | "when teachers "function in professional learning communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice; and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement."(p. 28) |
| Crowther, Kaagen, Ferguson, & Hann (2002) | "essentially an ethical stance that is based on views of both a better world and the power of teachers to shape meaning systems. It manifests in new forms of understanding and practice that contribute to school success and to the quality of life of the community in the long term." (p. 10) |
| Fullan& Hargreaves (1996) | "the capacity and commitment to contribute beyond one's own classroom." (p. 9) |
| Fullan (1994) | "inter-related domains of commitment and knowledge, including commitments of moral purpose and continuous learning and knowledge of teaching and learning, educational contexts, collegiality, and the change process." (p. 246) |
| Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001) | leaders who lead "within and beyond the classroom, influence others towards improved educational practice, and identify with and contribute to a community of teacher leaders." (p. 6) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Lambert (1998) | "broad-based, skillful involvement in the work of leadership." (p. 3)[a] |
| Miller, Moon, & Elko (2000) | "actions by teachers outside their classrooms that involve an explicit or implicit responsibility to provide professional development to their colleagues, to influence their communities' or districts' policies, or to act as adjunct staff to support changes in classroom practices among teachers." (p. 4) |
| Wasley (1991) | "the ability of the teacher leader to engage colleagues in experimentation and then examination of more powerful instructional practices in the service of more engaged student learning." (p. 170) |
| York-Barr & Duke (2004) | "the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement." (pp. 287-288) |
| Youitt (2007) | when teachers "lead learning by embracing new methods of teaching and learning. They understand the importance of the relationship between teachers and students (and their families). These teachers also frequently engage the use of new technologies in their teaching, and understand the need for resourcing flexibility to support educational innovation." (p. 1) |

Teacher leadership has been shown to have significant effects on the teacher leaders themselves including increased self-esteem (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Ovando, 1996), improved leadership skills (Lieberman et al., 1988; Ryan, 1999), improved pedagogical skills (Troen & Boles, 1992), greater self-efficacy (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996, 2001), and improved morale (Frost & Harris, 2003; Smylie, 1994). Besides the teacher leader, colleagues are positively affected by teacher leadership in the forms of assistance with instructional practice, support with disruptive students, and overcoming resistance to organizational change (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Ryan, 1999). Schoolwide effects of teacher leadership include increased school effectiveness

(Griffin, 1995; Hargreaves, 1991; Little, 1990; Ovando, 1996; Rosenholz, 1989; Taylor & Bogotch, 1994; Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000), greater acceptance of school reform (Weiss & Cambone, 1994), and improved implementation of new policies and procedures (Griffin, 1995). Finally, several studies have also shown that teacher leadership has had an indirect effect on student performance (Leithwood &Jantzi, 1998; Ovando, 1996; Silins, Mulford, & Zarins, 2002; Wong, 1996).

## Method

This multi-site, quantitative study builds upon previous research on the Teacher Leadership Instrument (TLI) and the related four-factor model of teacher leadership. The four-factor model consists of the following factors: Sharing Expertise, Sharing Leadership, Supra-Practitioner, and Principal Selection. In their 2010 paper introducing this model, Angelle and DeHart stated that the factor of Sharing Leadership consisted of two separate sub-factors, Leadership Opportunities and Leadership Engagement. Partitioning the Sharing Leadership factor into two separate factors allows for three other distinct models of teacher leadership.

To compare models, confirmatory factor analyses of the proposed model and the three alternative models were conducted using existing data from the second administration of the TLI. Once the analyses were run, model fit statistics and parameter estimates for each of the models were compared. First, the fit statistics for each model individually were examined using the chi-square statistic ($\chi 2$), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the parsimony goodness-of-fit index (PGFI), the non-normed fit index (NNFI), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Then, indices which allow for comparison across several models were examined, including Akaike's (1987) information criterion (AIC), the Consistent AIC (CAIC), and the expected cross-validation index (ECVI). Finally, parameter estimates including factor loadings and

factor correlations for each of the models were examined for statistical and substantive significance.

**Participants**

Four districts within a 60 mile radius of one US university were contacted for participation in the study. Three districts agreed to participate, including Ashton County,[1] Coleman County and Gotham City school districts. With permission of the university and the school districts, principals were then invited to participate, resulting in 23 schools and 241 teachers. Primary schools are those with student ages approximately 5 years to ten years. Middle school ages are approximately 11 years – 13 years and high schools enroll students 14 years – 18 years of age. There are 15 schools in Ashton County – nine primary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools. Of these 15 schools, 11 agreed to participate. Coleman County school district is comprised of 12 schools – nine primary schools, one combination middle/high school, and two high schools, with five agreeing to participate. Finally, all seven schools in Gotham City school district participated in the study, which included four primary schools, two middle schools, and one high school.

The sample of 421 respondents included 84.3% female and 15.7% male respondents. Teaching experience ranged from a minimum of zero years to a maximum of 45 years, with a mean experience of 16 years. The mean number of years spent teaching at the current school was 9.1 years, ranging from 0 to 40 years. When asked if they held a leadership position at their school, 44.7% of the respondents affirmed that they did while 55.3% stated they did not hold a position of leadership. Of the 421 respondents, 30.4% held Bachelor's degrees, 45.4% held Master's degrees, and 19.4% had matriculated beyond the Master's level (Master's + 30 hours, 5.2%; Master's + 45 hours, 2.6%; Education Specialist, 9.7%; Ph.D., 1.9%). A small group of

[1] All district names are pseudonyms to insure confidentiality.

respondents (4.8%) answered "Other" in response to their degree level, indicating they had an associate degree, a technical certification, or some other education below the level of a Bachelor's degree. A summary of respondents' demographic information is shown in Table 2. Table 3 depicts the numbers and percentages of male teachers, female teachers, and all teachers who responded to the TLI survey for each school system. Also shown in this table are the numbers and percentages of male teachers, female teachers, and all teachers for the schools included in this survey, as well as the percentage of teachers from each school system who responded to the TLI.

## The Models

To facilitate understanding, the models used for comparison in this study will be described along with graphical representations. The original four-factor model serves as the conceptual framework of this study and was described earlier along with definitions for each of the factors. Those four factors along with the two sub-factors of Sharing Leadership – Leadership Engagement and Leadership Opportunities – are used in different combinations to derive the following three alternative models. The original four-factor model and the three alternative models are depicted in Figure 2.

**The two-factor model**. In this alternative model, teacher leadership is explained wholly by two factors – the teacher-driven and the principal-driven leadership. Leadership attributed to teachers is composed of the factors of Sharing Expertise (SE) and Supra-Practitioner (SP) from the original four- factor model as well as the sub-factor of Leadership Engagement (SLE). Leadership attributed to the principal is composed of the Principal Selection factor from the original four-factor model and the sub-factor of Leadership Opportunities.

Table 2. *Demographic Information of TLI Respondents*

| | | Female | | | Male | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | count | % of females | % of all teacher participants | count | % of males | % of all teachers | count | % | Mean |
| Teaching Experience | 0 to 5 years | 77 | 21.7% | 18.3% | 10 | 15.2% | 2.4% | 87 | 20.7% | 16.0 years |
| | 6 to 15 years | 119 | 33.5% | 28.3% | 22 | 33.3% | 5.2% | 141 | 33.5% | |
| | 16 to 30 years | 113 | 31.8% | 26.8% | 26 | 39.4% | 6.2% | 139 | 33.0% | |
| | 30+ years | 46 | 13.0% | 10.9% | 8 | 12.1% | 1.9% | 54 | 12.8% | |
| Years at present school | 1 to 5 years | 169 | 47.6% | 40.1% | 31 | 47.0% | 7.4% | 200 | 47.5% | 9.1 years |
| | 6 to 10 years | 66 | 18.6% | 15.7% | 12 | 18.2% | 2.9% | 78 | 18.5% | |
| | 11 to 15 years | 53 | 14.9% | 12.6% | 9 | 13.6% | 2.1% | 62 | 14.7% | |
| | 16 to 20 years | 25 | 7.0% | 5.9% | 4 | 6.1% | 1.0% | 29 | 6.9% | |
| | 20+ years | 42 | 11.8% | 10.0% | 10 | 15.2% | 2.4% | 52 | 12.4% | |
| Position of leadership | Yes | 150 | 42.3% | 35.6% | 38 | 57.6% | 9.0% | 188 | 44.7% | |
| | No | 205 | 57.7% | 48.7% | 28 | 42.4% | 6.7% | 233 | 55.3% | |
| Highest degree earned | BA/BS | 103 | 29.0% | 24.5% | 25 | 37.9% | 5.9% | 128 | 30.4% | |
| | Masters | 172 | 48.5% | 40.9% | 19 | 28.8% | 4.5% | 191 | 45.4% | |
| | Masters + 30 | 17 | 4.8% | 4.0% | 5 | 7.6% | 1.2% | 22 | 5.2% | |
| | Masters + 45 | 8 | 2.3% | 1.9% | 3 | 4.5% | .7% | 11 | 2.6% | |
| | Specialist | 33 | 9.3% | 7.8% | 8 | 12.1% | 1.9% | 41 | 9.7% | |
| | PhD/EdD | 5 | 1.4% | 1.2% | 3 | 4.5% | .7% | 8 | 1.9% | |
| | Other | 17 | 4.8% | 4.0% | 3 | 4.5% | .7% | 20 | 4.8% | |
| School Level | Elementary | 212 | 62.7% | 52.6% | 11 | 16.9% | 2.7% | 223 | 55.3% | |
| | Middle | 56 | 16.6% | 13.9% | 24 | 36.9% | 6.0% | 80 | 19.9% | |
| | High | 70 | 20.7% | 17.4% | 30 | 46.2% | 7.4% | 100 | 24.8% | |

Table 3.

*Comparison of Teacher Respondents to All Teachers in Participating School Systems by Gender*

| | Teacher Respondents | | | | All Teachers in Participating Schools | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | | Female | | Male | | Female | | % of All Teachers Responding |
| | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | |
| Ashton County | 25 | 11.8% | 187 | 88.2% | 74 | 19.9% | 298 | 80.1% | 57.0% |
| Coleman County | 14 | 17.7% | 65 | 82.3% | 74 | 33.5% | 147 | 66.5% | 35.7% |
| Gotham City | 27 | 20.8% | 103 | 79.2% | 95 | 26.8% | 259 | 73.2% | 36.7% |
| Total | 66 | 15.7% | 355 | 84.3% | 243 | 25.7% | 704 | 74.3% | 44.5% |

**The three-factor model**. In this model, teacher leadership is explained only by the three factors which comprised the teacher-driven leadership component of the two-factor model. However, the three factors (SE, SP, and SLE) are not combined into one all-encompassing factor of teacher-driven leadership. The survey items which corresponded with principal-driven leadership are not included in this model.

**The five-factor model**. The final model used for comparison is a modification of the four-factor model. This model consists of the original components of Sharing Expertise, Supra-Practitioner, and Principal Selection and the two sub-factors of Leadership

Opportunities and Leadership Engagement. These two sub-factors were derived from the Sharing Leadership factor.

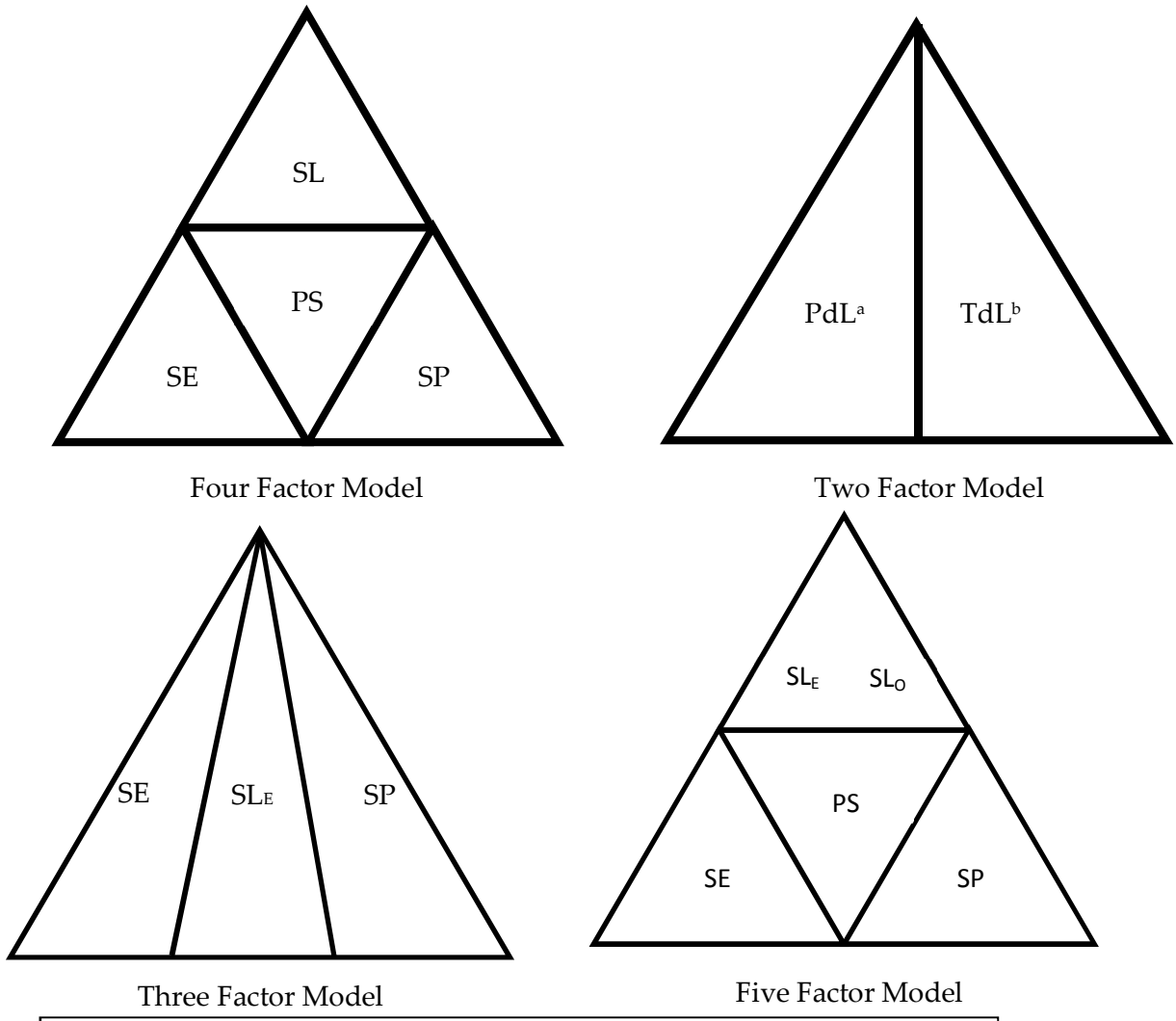


Figure 2. The four models of teacher leadership.

a. Principal-driven Leadership composed of Leadership Opportunities and Principal Selection; b. Teacher-driven Leadership composed of Sharing Expertise, Supra-Practitioner, and Leadership Engagement.

## Findings

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on all four models using LISREL 8.72. Path diagrams indicate the error variances, factor loadings (standardized regression coefficients), and factor correlations. Path diagrams and parameter estimates for the two-, three-, four-, and five-factor models are presented in Appendices A – D. A correlation matrix for teachers' responses to the TLI is found in Appendix E.As part of the statistical analysis; LISREL produces several fit statistics which are used to assess how well the proposed models fit the data. Brown (2006) identified three categories of fit indices: (a) absolute fit indices, (b) fit indices which adjust for model parsimony, and (c) comparative fit indices. Brown recommends that researchers report at least one index from each of these three categories. Harrington (2009) also included a category called predictive fit indices which are used to compare two or more non-nested models. The absolute ($\chi^2$,$\chi^2/df$, GFI), parsimony (RMSEA, PGFI), and comparative (CFI, NNFI) fit indices for each of the four models are shown in Table 4. Also included are the 90% confidence intervals for the RMSEA values and recommended values for good model fit. The predictive fit indices (AIC, CAIC, ECVI) for each of the models are shown in Table 5. The 90% confidence interval for the ECVI is also included.

## Model Comparisons

### Four-factor Model vs. Two-factor Model

Examination of the chi-square statistics for the four-factor model ($\chi^2_{(113)} = 263.731$, $p < .01$) and the two-factor model ($\chi^2_{(118)} = 492.317$, $p < .01$) indicated that both models demonstrated a poor fit to the data. However, due to sensitivity to sample size, $\chi^2$ is rarely used as a sole indicator of model fit (Brown, 2006; Byrne, 2010; Kline, 2005; Thompson, 2004). One method proposed to address this problem was the ratio of $\chi^2$ to degrees of freedom ($\chi^2/df$) (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). Kline (2005) suggested a $\chi^2/df$ ratio less than 3 to be an

indicator of good model fit. The four-factor model demonstrated good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.33$),

Table 4.

*Absolute, Parsimony, and Comparative Fit Indices for the Two-, Three-, Four-, and Five-Factor Models of Teacher Leadership*

| | | Absolute Fit Indices | | | Parsimony Fit Indices | | | Comparative Fit Indices | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *df* | $\chi$2 | $\chi$2/*df* | GFI | RMSEA | 90% CI for RMSEA | PGFI | CFI | NNFI |
| Recommended values for good model fit | | *p*> .05[a] | < 3[b] | ≥ .90[a] | ≤ .06[c] | | ≥ .50[d] | ≥ .95[e] | ≥ .95[e] |
| Two-factor model | 118 | 492.317 (*p*< .01) | 4.17 | .962 | .087 | [.079, .095] | .742 | .933 | .923 |
| Three-factor model | 41 | 86.974 (p < .01) | 2.12 | .988 | .052 | [.037, .067] | .614 | .982 | .975 |
| Four-factor model | 113 | 263.731 (p < .01) | 2.33 | .980 | .056 | [.048, .065] | .723 | .973 | .968 |
| Five-factor model | 109 | 260.493 (p < .01) | 2.39 | .980 | .058 | [.049, .067] | .698 | .973 | .966 |

*Note: df* = degrees of freedom; $\chi^2$ = chi-square; GFI = goodness-of-fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; PGFI = parsimony goodness-of-fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; NNFI = non-normed fit index.

[a]Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993. [b]Kline, 2005. [c]Cudeck & Brown, 1993. [d]Mulaik et al., 1989. [e]Hu & Bentler, 1999.

Table 5.

*Predictive Fit Indices for the Two-, Three-, Four-, and Five-Factor Models of Teacher Leadership*

| | ECVI | 90% CI for ECVI | AIC | CAIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Two-factor model | 1.339 | [1.185, 1.511] | 562.317 | 738.809 |
| Three-factor model | 0.326 | [0.271, 0.399] | 136.974 | 263.040 |
| Four-factor model | 0.818 | [0.715, 0.940] | 343.731 | 545.437 |
| Five-factor model | 0.830 | [0.726, 0.951] | 348.493 | 570.369 |

*Note:* N = 421. ECVI = expected cross validation index; CI = confidence interval; AIC = Akaike's information criterion; CAIC = consistent AIC.

whereas the ratio for the two-factor model indicated poor fit ($\chi^2/df$ = 4.17).

Values for the GFI, CFI, and NNFI also suggested good model fit for the four-factor model (GFI = .980, CFI = .973, NNFI = .968) but only adequate fit for the two-factor model (GFI = .962, CFI = .933, NNFI = .923). For the two-factor model, both the RMSEA and the low end of the 90% confidence interval for the RMSEA fell above the suggested cutoff point of .06 (RMSEA = .087, CI [.079, .095]). However, the same values for the four-factor model (RMSEA = .056, CI [.048, .065]) indicated good fit to the data. Although the PGFI for the two-factor model was slightly higher than the four-factor model (.742 and .723, respectively), this is to be expected considering the more parsimonious nature of the two-factor model. Finally, all three predictive indices for the four-factor model (ECVI = .818, CI [.715, .940]; AIC = 343.731; CAIC = 545.437) were lower than those for the two-factor model (ECVI = 1.339, CI [1.185, 1.511]; AIC = 562.317; CAIC = 738.809), providing further support that the four-factor model resulted in better fit.

**Four-factor Model vs. Three-factor Model**

For the three-factor model, the chi-square showed poor model fit ($\chi^2$ = 86.974, $p$< .01) but the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom indicated good fit ($\chi^2/df$ = 2.12). Other goodness-of-fit indices for the three-factor model indicated slightly better fit than the four-factor model (GFI = .988 vs. .980, RMSEA = .052 vs. .056, CFI = .982 vs. .973, NNFI = .975 vs. .968 for the three-factor and four-factor models, respectively). The PGFI, which accounts for model parsimony, was not as strong in the three-factor model (.614) as in the four-factor model (.723). Examination of the predictive fit indices revealed better fit for the three-factor model over the four-factor model (ECVI = 0.326 vs. 0.818, AIC = 136.974 vs. 343.731, CAIC = 263.040 vs. 545.437 for the three-factor and four-factor models, respectively).

**Four-factor Model vs. Five-factor Model**

Similar to the other three models, the chi-square for the five-factor model demonstrated poor model fit ($\chi^2$ = 260.493, $p$< .01). The ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom indicated good model fit ($\chi^2/df$ = 2.39), but not as good as that for the four-factor model ($\chi^2/df$ = 2.33).

Other goodness-of-fit indices indicated no appreciable differences between the five-factor and four-factor models (GFI = .980 vs. .980, RMSEA = .056 vs. .058, PGFI = .723 vs. .698, CFI = .973 vs. .973, NNFI = .968 vs. .966 for the four-factor and five-factor models, respectively). Predictive fit indices for the four-factor model were lower than those for the five-factor model, indicating better fit for the former (ECVI = 0.818 vs. 0.830, AIC = 343.731 vs. 348.493, CAIC = 545.437 vs. 570.369 for the four-factor and five-factor models, respectively). While the four-factor model shows only marginally better fit than the five-factor model, further information is gained by examining the factor correlations in the five-factor model. Correlations among the latent factors in the five-factor model were moderate to strong except for the correlation between Leadership Engagement ($SL_E$) and Leadership Opportunities ($SL_O$). The correlation between these two factors ($\varrho$ = .98) supported collapsing both factors into a single factor (Brown, 2006).

**Three-factor vs. Four-factor Revisited**

While the fit indices indicated that the three-factor model provided the best model fit for the data used in this study, evaluation of CFA models should also include a close inspection of the strength and interpretability of the parameter estimates (Brown, 2006; Schwarzer, Bäßler, Kwiatek, & Schröder, 1997). A closer examination of the fit indices and the parameters of all four models as well as a review of prior research provide support for retaining the four-factor model of teacher leadership.

**Fit indices.** As described earlier, the fit indices for the three-factor model indicated better model fit than those for the four-factor model. Of all of the fit statistics, the $\chi 2$ statistic exhibited the greatest discrepancy between the two models ($\chi 2$ = 86.974 and 263.731 for the three-factor and four-factor models, respectively). However, $\chi 2$ is expected to be large relative to the degrees of freedom (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993), and the *df* for the four-factor model was nearly three times that of the three factor model (*df*= 41 and 113 for the three-factor and four-factor models, respectively). The fit index of $\chi 2/df$ adjusts for this effect, and yet the values for $\chi 2/df$ for the two models did not differ greatly ($\chi 2/df$ = 2.12 and 2.33 for the three-factor and four-factor models, respectively). Similarly, other fit indices did not have highly

disparate values between the two models including the GFI, CFI, and NNFI.

Furthermore, values for the PGFI were not as expected. The PGFI accounts for model complexity, and more parsimonious models (i.e., those having fewer parameters) should result in higher PGFI values. However, with 25 parameters, the PGFI for the three-factor model (.614) was lower than that for the four-factor model (.723) consisting of 40 parameters.

Finally, examination of the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) provided doubt of the better fit of the three-factor model over the four-factor model. While both RMSEA values were acceptable, there was marginal difference between the two. Additionally, the 90% confidence interval for the RMSEA provides evidence of the precision of the point estimate (Brown, 2006; Byrne, 2009). With a .030 difference between the upper and lower bounds of the confidence interval, the RMSEA for the three-factor model exhibited less precision than that for the four-factor model (difference = .017). Also, the upper bound of the RMSEA for the four-factor model (.065) was slightly better than that for the three-factor model (.067).

**Parameters.** The primary difference between the two models is the presence of observed variables which include actions attributable to the school principal in the four-factor model but not in the three-factor model. However, the two models do share the latent factors of Sharing Expertise, Supra-Practitioner, and Leadership Engagement. These three factors are comprised of 11 observed variables. When the factor loadings for these 11 variables are compared between the two models (Table 6), the four-factor model results in higher factor loadings for all but two of the variables (Items 4 and 10). Thus, even though the indices are less fitting for the four-factor model, this model explains more of the variance in the observed variables than does the three-factor model.

Furthermore, CFA results of the two-factor and five-factor models provided evidence that the factors which include principal behaviors are distinct constructs with strong factor loadings and that Leadership Engagement, the teacher-driven component of Sharing Leadership, should not be separated from Leadership Opportunities, the principal-driven component of Sharing Leadership. In the two-factor model, the correlation between Teacher-Driven Leadership

(TdL) and Principal-Driven Leadership (PdL) (r = -.95) indicated that teacher perceptions of principal actions which contribute to teacher leadership are uniquely different from actions attributed to teachers. The factor loadings for the PdL factor ranged from good ($\lambda$11= .57) to very good ($\lambda$15 = .63; $\lambda$17 = .70) to excellent ($\lambda$8 = .85; $\lambda$9 = .90; $\lambda$10 = .82). Thus, a significant amount of the variance in the observed variables for this factor was explained. Also, in the five-factor model, the correlation between Leadership Engagement and Leadership Opportunities approached the value of 1 (r = .98). According to Brown (2006), these two factors are measuring the same construct and should be collapsed into a single latent factor.

Table 6.

*Common Factor Loadings for the Three- and Four-factor Models of Teacher Leadership*

| Latent Factor | Survey Item # | Factor Loading | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Three-factor Model | Four-factor Model |
| Sharing Expertise | 1 | 0.556 | 0.574 |
| | 2 | 0.783 | 0.800 |
| | 3 | 0.902 | 0.941 |
| | 4 | 0.911 | 0.879 |
| | 7 | 0.678 | 0.748 |
| Supra Practitioner | 8 | 0.845 | 0.878 |
| | 9 | 0.906 | 0.927 |
| | 10 | 0.867 | 0.862 |
| Leadership Engagement | 5 | 0.830 | 0.847 |
| | 6 | 0.871 | 0.887 |
| | 13 | 0.674 | 0.776 |

**Related research.** Unlike the three-factor model, the four-factor model includes the actions of the principal, and research has shown the pivotal role of the principal in developing and sustaining teacher leadership. For example, many of the roles occupied by teacher leaders are administrative in nature (Barth, 1999). These roles are generally under the purview of the principal, and so teacher leaders and principals must collaborate on these responsibilities (Harris & Muijs, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; Malen, Ogawa, & Krantz,

1990, Smylie & Denny, 1990). In order for this collaboration in leadership to take place, principals must be willing to support and encourage teacher leadership (Boles & Troen, 1996; Crowther et al., 2002; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

One way that principals can support teacher leadership is by offering teachers opportunities to be involved in leadership activities. The factor of Leadership Opportunities, absent from the three-factor model, represents this attitude in the school administration. In a case study of two demographically similar schools undergoing school reform, Hart (1995) found more successful change in the school in which the principal "deliberately structured visible opportunities for [the teachers] to exert leadership" (p. 495). If teacher leadership is to be developed within a school, it is "essential for principals to create opportunities for teachers to lead" (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000, p. 31).

Of course, providing leadership opportunities does no good unless teachers are willing to engage in these leadership activities (Acker-Hocevar & Touchton, 1999). Smylie (1992) surveyed 116 teachers to explore teachers' inclinations to engage in decision-making associated with school leadership. The results indicated that the principal-teacher relationship was the only statistically significant influence on teachers' willingness to participate in administrative decisions (Smylie, 1992). The pivotal role of the principal in facilitating productive teacher leader–principal relationships is emphasized in the literature (Barth, 2001; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; Crowther et al., 2002; Hart, 1994; Lieberman, 1988; Little, 1988). In turn, these relationships play a key factor in the effectiveness of teacher leaders (LeBlanc & Shelton, 1997; Silva et al., 2000).

Other theories of leadership support this notion of the principal and teachers' collaborative roles in leadership activities. Participative leadership (York-Barr & Duke, 2004) focuses on the decision-making processes of all stakeholders in a school. Ogawa and Bossert (1995) state that leadership is an organizational phenomenon not confined to specific roles, but rather distributed throughout a network of roles. In describing the concept of distributed leadership, Spillane et al. (2001) asserted that leadership should be distributed throughout an "interactive web of actors" (p. 23) including both principals and teachers. Finally, parallel leadership is "a process whereby teacher leaders and their principals engage in collective action to build school capacity" (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 38).

**Summary.** Further review has demonstrated that the four-factor model provides a better representation of teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership in a school than the three-factor model. The fit indices, while more indicative of model fit for the three-factor model, were not substantially different, and both PGFI and RMSEA indices actually indicated better fit for the four-factor model. Furthermore, nine out of eleven factor loadings for observed variables shared by both models were stronger in the four-factor model than the three-factor model. Additionally, factor loadings and latent factor correlations from the two-factor and five-factor models provided evidence that the principal's role contributed to the understanding of teacher leadership. This contribution was further supported by prior research in the teacher leadership literature.

## Discussion

In this final section, the unusual results of negative factor loadings and negative correlations will be discussed in relation to the four-factor model. Then, implications for both theory and practice will be addressed.

### Negative Loadings and Correlations

In the two-factor model, three items resulted in negative factor loadings. In the four-factor model, one factor was negatively correlated with the other factors. These negative values deserve further discussion.

**Negative loadings of the two-factor model.** For the latent factor of Principal-driven Leadership (PdL), three of the observed variables had negative factor loadings ($\lambda_{12}$ = -.90, $\lambda_{14}$ = -.94, $\lambda_{16}$ = -.72). These observed variables also comprise the component of the Sharing Leadership factor (SL) attributed to the principal in the four-factor model and the factor of Leadership Opportunities ($SL_O$) in the five-factor model. According to their critical ratios, these factor loadings were significant, and the latent factor of PdL explained 81%, 88%, and 52% of the variance in items 12, 14, and 16, respectively. The other three variables associated with PdL had significant, positive loadings and comprised the factor of Principal Selection (PS) in the four- and five-factor models.

The differences between these two sets of loadings indicated that respondents who score high on items 12, 14, and 16 would score low

on items 11, 15, and 17, and vice versa. These results showed that these two sets of items should not belong to the same factor. This supported the four-factor model's SL factor. Furthermore, the significant loadings for all six of the items demonstrated that the respondents recognized the behaviors described in the items as being attributed to principals rather than teachers. This was supported by the very strong, negative correlation ($r^2$ = -.95) between the factors of Principal-driven Leadership and Teacher-driven Leadership in the two-factor model. Together, these two results – the difference in loading direction and the significant loadings – provide further preference for the four-factor model over the three-factor model by recognizing the contribution of principal behaviors to the concept of teacher leadership.

**Negative correlations of the four-factor model.** For the four-factor model, the factor of Principal Selection (PS) correlated negatively with each of the other factors. This indicates that a respondent scoring high on SE, SL, or SP will score low on PS, and vice-versa. By reverse-coding the three observed variables which correspond to PS (items 11, 15, and 17), positive correlations could be achieved. Reverse-coding is often used with negatively-worded items (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). However, items 11, 15, and 17 were not negatively worded, and thus should not be reverse-coded. Reverse-coding would only serve to distort the meaning of the construct of Principal Selection.

For example, item 11 was *"administrators object when teachers take on leadership responsibilities."* Reverse-coding this item would be similar to re-wording the item to read *"administrators do not object when teachers take on leadership opportunities,"* or, to word the item positively, *"administrators approve when teachers take on leadership responsibilities."* Such a revision changes the latent factor from one focused on principals who control the avenues to leadership in a school to one focused on principal support for teachers taking leadership initiative. These are two completely different concepts. The same reasoning applies to the other two items for the factor of Principal Selection. While these items may suggest a negative perception of the principal, they are not necessarily negatively worded.

**Implications for Theory**

Christensen and Demski (2002) stated that theory is useful because "it provides structure for organizing our thoughts about some set of phenomena" (p. 6). Theories of educational leadership abound, and many, such as participative leadership, distributed leadership, and parallel leadership, include teachers as a component of leadership (Crowther et al., 2002; Spillane et al., 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Though focused on the four-factor model of teacher leadership, this study filled a theoretical gap by examining educational leadership through the lens of teacher as the cornerstone. Moreover, important insights from this work connect the model to established theories and theoretical constructs and also contribute to a better understanding of teacher leadership as a theory.

The need for effective school leadership has been spurred by issues of high stakes accountability and school reform (Little, 2003) with teachers as a component of leadership. For example, the theory of distributed leadership (Spillane et al., 2001) proposes that leadership is constituted within a "web of actors" (p. 23) which includes principals, teachers, and other stakeholders in the community. In discussing leadership as an organizational phenomenon, Ogawa and Bossert (1995) state that leadership is spread out over a network of roles which includes teachers. While leadership in an organization should be viewed as a group effort, there can exist situations which demand a closer inspection of specific individuals within the group. The four-factor model of teacher leadership fills this gap by offering a lens which focuses on the leadership practices of the teachers within a school. Furthermore, the leadership activities outlined in the four-factor model include those of both formal and informal teacher leaders.

Each of the factors in the four-factor model explain different attributes of teacher leadership, and each of these factors can be related to established theories or theoretical constructs. The factor of Sharing Expertise describes teachers' willingness to share skills and knowledge with their colleagues. A related theoretical construct is Prosocial Organizational Behavior (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986) described as behavior directed towards a fellow member of an organization with the intention of promoting the welfare of that member. The factor of Sharing Expertise is also reflected in the theory of Situated Learning and Communities of Practice (Lave &

Wenger, 1991) in which the members of a common practice share information and experiences for the purpose of learning from each other.

As previously mentioned, the theories of distributed leadership (Spillane et al., 2001) and parallel leadership (Crowther et al., 2002) both stress the importance of the factor of Sharing Leadership from the four-factor model. In these theories, the teachers and administrators engage in shared decision-making. This principal-teacher relationship is expressed in the Sharing Leadership factor's two components of Leadership Opportunities, wherein principals provide leadership opportunities for teachers, and Leadership Engagement, wherein teachers take advantage of these opportunities to accept leadership responsibilities.

The third factor of Supra-Practitioner is characterized by teachers' willingness to go above and beyond their prescribed roles. This characterization is similar to the theories of Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Extra-Role Behavior. Organ (1988) described Organizational Citizenship Behavior as "behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (p. 4), while Extra-Role Behaviors were similarly defined as "behaviors which benefit the organization and/or is intended to benefit the organization, which is discretionary and which goes beyond existing role expectations" (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995, p. 218).

Finally, the factor of Principal Selection describes perceptions that the principal selects specific teachers to engage in leadership activities while restraining others from those same responsibilities. These behaviors are similar to the formation of in-groups and out-groups as described in Leader-Member Exchange theory (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). By only allowing certain teachers to engage in leadership roles, a principal creates an in-group, excluding other teachers who are then considered part of the out-group. Out-group members may feel resentment towards members of the in-group and may downplay the importance of leadership activities.

The four-factor model has implications for advancing the theoretical perspective of teacher leadership. As described above, the four-factor model focuses mainly on teachers' participation in educational leadership and includes both formal and informal roles.

The model also incorporates theoretical concepts from several other theories, bringing them together in one model. Based upon empirical research, the four-factor model offers a theoretical perspective from which teacher leadership may be examined.

**Implications for Practice**

In an effort to respond to high stakes initiatives, educational reform efforts expect teachers to assume more responsibility and leadership (Bartlett, 2004; Little, 2003). Collegiality and collaboration among teachers are becoming the norm, and teachers in leadership positions have proven beneficial in helping their colleagues to adapt to these changes (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lieberman & Miller, 2005). These teacher leaders occupy both formal and informal roles within a school (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Harris & Muijs, 2005; MacBeath, 1998; Smylie & Mayrowetz, 2009). Research has demonstrated direct and indirect positive effects of teacher leaders on the self-esteem, pedagogical skills, self-efficacy, and morale of their fellow teachers, as well as positive effects on student engagement and student performance (Frost & Harris, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996, 2001; Ovando, 1996; Silins & Mulford, 2002; Smylie, 1994; Troen & Boles, 1992).

School principals and superintendents must be prepared to measure teacher leadership, both formal and informal, as these reforms continue. While further testing of the Teacher Leadership Inventory and the four-factor model of teacher leadership is warranted, they both show considerable promise for providing a means to gauge school-wide teacher leadership. School and district leaders may use the TLI along with the four-factor model to assess levels of teacher leadership practices in a school and plan appropriate professional development. Providing leadership training to teachers who undertake these roles is crucial for developing effective leadership (Andrew, 1974; Lieberman & Miller, 1999; Welch et al., 1992).

Furthermore, school principals can look to the four-factor model as a guide for developing teacher leadership within their schools. By recognizing that activities such as sharing expertise and going beyond prescribed roles are a function of leadership, principals can recognize and reward the efforts of those teachers. Understanding

the relationship between the sub-factors of Leadership Opportunities and Leadership Engagement can make principals more effective in extending leadership roles to all faculty members. Similarly, an awareness of the inverse effect of Principal Selection on teachers' desires to engage in leadership may cause principals to offer leadership responsibilities to a wider range of teachers. Overall, principals' understanding of the four-factor model may lead to greater recognition, fostering, and valuing of teacher leadership within a school, thereby increasing teachers' willingness to engage in leadership roles (LeBlanc & Shelton, 1997; Smylie, 1992).

Even before becoming a part of a school's faculty, teachers should be exposed to leadership training as part of the teacher training programs in institutions of higher education. As early as 1974, Andrew noted that there must be "a major change in existing patterns of teacher training" (p. 2) if teachers are to take on leadership roles. The four-factor model of teacher leadership provides an outline of skills and attitudes for teacher training programs as they strive to include leadership training for future teachers. Novice teachers who have been exposed to the concepts of the four factors included in this model may be more likely to seek out and engage in leadership opportunities, thus addressing the calls for improved preparation of future teacher leaders (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; Ovando, 1996; Silva et al., 2000).

With increasing accountability, principals and superintendents must be prepared to measure teacher leadership, both formal and informal. While further testing of the Teacher Leadership Inventory and the four-factor model of teacher leadership is warranted, they both show considerable promise for providing a means to gauge school-wide teacher leadership. School and district leaders may use the TLI along with the four-factor model to assess levels of teacher leadership practices in a school and plan appropriate professional development. The four-factor model of teacher leadership provides an outline of skills and attitudes for teacher training programs as they strive to include leadership training for future teachers.

## Conclusion

From high-stakes testing to increased accountability to professional learning communities, reform efforts have affected many aspects of the educational process. The roles and responsibilities of

teachers must change to accommodate these efforts. Teacher leadership encompasses many of these changes which teachers must adopt. Collaboration, shared decision-making, extra-role responsibilities, and the role of the principal in guiding teacher participation are ways that leadership opportunities are offered to teachers to respond to these reform efforts. When teacher leadership occurs in schools, positive effects extend to the teacher leaders, to their colleagues, and, most especially, to the students. The four-factor model of teacher leadership can provide administrators the means to assess the levels of teacher leadership, to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, and to plan professional development to encourage teacher leadership in their schools. For researchers, this model also offers a means to examine formal and informal teacher leadership from a theoretical standpoint.

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# International Perspectives on the Micropolitics of the Superintendency

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**Abstract**

*The rise of globalization compelled national governments to examine how they would adapt widespread social, economic, and political changes to advance their nation's future wellbeing. Most recognized the pivotal role of education in facilitating adaptation to changes unfolding in society and expressed concern about the quality of their education systems and student academic performance. During the last three decades, nations engaged in what is generally regarded as one of the most intense and protracted attempts at educational reform in recent history. National educational reform initiatives initiated in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) and in the United States of America. In many instances, shifts in national education policy altered how school districts were organized, managed, and governed which in turn reconfigured superintendents' roles. An examination of findings from recent nationwide studies on superintendents suggests that decentralization and devolution of decision-making authority to municipal governments, local schools, and parents may have heightened the importance their micropolitical roles in the provision of education.*

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## Introduction

During the past several decades, the rise of global economic competition forced policymakers to link student academic performance to their nations' long-term economic survival. This heightened concern about the capacity of national education systems to ensure next generations of students are literate, numerate, and capable generated collaboratively developed innovative solutions to difficult problems (Björk & Browne-Ferrigno, 2012, 2014). The primary objective of most educational reform initiatives is to improve student learning and students' capacity to identify and solve problems. These reforms created a forum through which citizens, educators, and policymakers examined fundamental assumptions about the devolution of authority from central governments to local municipalities, education funding, definition of education providers, and expansion of teacher and parent involvement in school-based decision making. Recent nationwide studies conducted in the Nordic countries (i.e., Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden) suggest that national educational reform legislation has altered the way school districts are organized, funded, and governed. Findings from recent empirical, nationwide studies provide insight into the dynamic interplay between globalization and national education reform policies that both recentralized and decentralized many key dimensions of education authority and that likewise profoundly influenced the nature and direction of superintendents' work (Björk, Johansson, & Bredeson, 2014; Johansson & Nihlfors, 2014; Moos, 2014; Paulsen, 2014; Risku, Karnervio, & Björk, 2014). These nationwide reports and scholarly studies not only enhance our understanding of the devolution of governance and decision-making authority in the Nordic countries but also heighten our understanding of how superintendents' have increased their acuity for micropolitics.

## Methods

Nationwide studies funded by the Finnish and Norwegian ministries of education and national research councils in Sweden and Denmark (2009-2011) provide an empirical foundation for a discussion about the how shifts in national education policies influenced changes in the nature and direction of superintendents work. Study findings suggest that the devolution of decision-making authority altered superintendents' roles, moving them away from management towards micropolitical dispositions. Taken together, these studies provide insight into one dimension of superintendents' role characterizations in an international setting.

## Superintendent Roles

Most scholars concur that educational reform initiatives launched during the last three decades (1983-2016) in the Nordic countries and the United States of America (USA) have altered the nature and direction of superintendents' work (Björk et al., 2014). Five role characterizations used to describe the nature of superintendents in these international contexts were developed by scholars in the United States who grounded their work in historical and empirical evidence (Björk, Browne-Ferrigno, & Kowalski, 2014). Taken together, role characterizations provide a useful analytic framework for discussing the complexity of superintendents' work in other national contexts and understanding how their roles have changed and are changing in response to emerging national education policies. Although these roles may be intertwined and may increase or wane in importance as contexts change, none have become irrelevant.

The first four role conceptualizations that were identified by Callahan (1966) emerged during several eras including *teacher-scholar* (1850 to early 1900s), *organizational manager* (early 1900s to 1930), *democratic-political leader* (1930 to mid-1950s) and *applied social scientist* (mid-1950s to mid-1970s). The fifth role, *communicator* (mid-1970s to present), was incorporated into the literature during the first decade

of the 21st century by Kowalski (2001, 2003, 2005, 2006). These five role characterizations provide a template for understanding superintendents' work in the USA as well as a wide array of international educational reform contexts. Briefly discussing each of these roles may help readers understand the breadth and depth of superintendents' work as well as situate the discussion of the micropolitics of the superintendency

**Superintendent as Teacher-Scholar**

Historical evidence suggests that the superintendents' role as teacher-scholar emerged during the 1890s and was aligned closely with their being viewed as a master teacher (Callahan, 1962). Their responsibilities included training and monitoring classroom teachers, supervising curriculum development, supporting learning-teaching activities, and improving student academic outcomes (Cuban, 1976b; Kowalski & Björk, 2005). During the late 19th century, school districts expanded exponentially and superintendents' primary role as teacher-scholar was eclipsed by management responsibilities. In the decades following the 1983 release of the *Nation at Risk* report that launched national educational reform in the USA, expectations for superintendents were gradually altered to align with new education policy initiatives that underscored the importance of ensuring that all children learn at high levels. Although their management role remained a dominant characteristic, the superintendent's role as a teacher-scholar re-emerged but with an important shift in how they enacted this role.

During the most recent era of educational reform that unfolded within the USA between 1983 and 2016, superintendents' involvement in improving student academic performance was more indirect than direct. They enacted it by using management tools uniquely at their disposal to create a districtwide environment in which staffs could accomplish their work. Key areas included maintaining and monitoring a clear instructional and curricular focus, recruiting and selecting staffs, supervising and evaluating

principals, and strategically planning for instruction (Björk, 1993). Findings from two successive nationwide studies indicated shifts in expectations: Glass, Björk, and Brunner (2000) found that 40% of superintendents responding to their survey reported that their school boards expected them to serve as an educational leader. A decade later, Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, and Ellerson (2011) reported that more than 60% of superintendents responding to a national survey indicated that their school boards expected them to serve as instructional leaders, which ranked third in importance among the five role characterizations.

**Superintendent as Manager**

As the size and complexity of public school districts expanded during the late 19th century, superintendents' primary role as teacher-scholar was eclipsed by expectations for them to serve as school-district managers (Cuban, 1976b) with the goal of making districts run more like efficient businesses (Kowalski, 1999). This role redefinition was supported by leading scholars in the field (e.g., Elmwood Cubberly, George Strayer, Franklin Bobbitt) who argued persuasively in favor of creating a corporate model in education in which school boards ceded executive control over business affairs to superintendents. They also acknowledged that their new management role would invariably increase superintendents' stature, influence, and power within local communities (Callahan, 1962). During the following decades, superintendents served as chief executive offices and handled budgets, operations, personnel, and facilities. Although the roles of teacher-scholar and manager seemed unrelated, educational reformers recognized that they were not mutually exclusive but complementary dimensions of their work (Kowalski, 1999; Browne-Ferrigno & Glass, 2005). In many instances, superintendents used their position as district manager to launch and sustain important reforms focused on improving learning and teaching. Rather than viewing their management responsibilities as constraining, they realized that their executive management role enabled them to collaborate with district school-board members in

making strategic decisions and persist over time in accomplishing common goals.

**Superintendent as Applied Social Scientist**

The notion of superintendents using research findings and district-level data in making important decisions about improving learning and teaching is not a new concept but rather a common-sense principle of good management (Kowalski et al., 2011). For example, Callahan (1966) discusses the importance of educators using social-science research findings to identify causes and corrective measures for poor academic performance among low income and minority students. Superintendents' disposition towards data-informed decision making recognizes the relationship between education and society and is central to understanding how changing demographics, poverty, racism, drugs, and violence may affect children's academic performance (Culbertson, 1981; Fusarelli & Fusarelli, 2005; Kochan, Jackson & Duke, 1999). The superintendents' role as social scientist was a central tenet of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which was replaced in 2015 by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. The new federal law focuses on equal opportunity for all students and assurance that all high school graduates are fully prepared to enter the workforce or postsecondary education. Evidenced-based practice has thus become a professional expectation for superintendents in the 20th century.

**Superintendent as Communicator**

Since the mid-1950s, the rise of information-based societies has heightened citizens' expectations for greater transparency in corporate and government affairs, public education, and student academic performance. This sea change—from the public viewing school districts as closed systems to viewing them as open systems—has influenced significantly the acceptability of impersonal communication as well as school and district staffs' forbearance with receiving directives down a chain of command (Achilles & Lintz, 1983; Luthans, 1981). Dispositions that accompanied the availability

of information fundamentally altered the way superintendents communicated externally with broad-based communities (Kowalski, 2001) and internally with educators and staff members. A case in point is the educational reform movement that began in the USA in the early1980s.

The heightened intensity of public discourse surrounding educational reform had several important outcomes. First, it focused national attention on the need for accountability to ensure that schools improved student academic performance. Second, the national conversation became more inclusive, thus giving citizens and parents a greater voice that shifted discourse towards the notion that all children should learn at high levels. Third, relational models of effective leadership that emerged concurrently with the press for educational reform underscored the importance of replacing conventional top-down communication patterns that negatively impacted staffs (Guzley, 1992; Trombetta & Rogers, 1988) with two-way communication patterns that minimized perceptions of power differences with school- and district-level administrators and thus enabled greater levels of participation (Kowalski et al., 2011).

These shifts were gradual but irreversible. For example, two decades after the educational reform movement began with publication of *A Nation at Risk*, Glass and colleagues (2000) found that a majority of superintendents interacted with parents and citizens in setting district objectives and priorities, strategic planning, program and curriculum decisions, and fundraising. Communication patterns continued to shift. Later, Kowalski et al. (2011) reported that the single most important role superintendents played in their districts was that of serving as an effective communicator with broad-based constituency groups and internal staffs. The rise of an information-based society clearly expanded expectations for transparency and collaborative work environments essential to launching and sustaining educational reforms (Kowalski & Keedy, 2005).

**Superintendent as Democratic-Political Leader**

During the formative years (1860-1930) of the superintendent in the USA, the notion of political engagement was reserved for school-board members and representatives of local governments (Björk & Lindle, 2001; Kowalski, 1995). However, the social and political turbulence that accompanied the Great Depression of the 1930s thrust superintendents into the political milieu of their local communities and school districts. Melby (1955) asserted that a resurgence of parent activism to regain control of their schools and competition for increasingly scarce resources (e.g. gaining bond issue approval and increasing local school taxes) would irrevocably alter superintendents' views about their political role. Their perceptions proved useful during the ensuing decades when they were required to galvanize support of school-board members, citizens, parents, and employees to implement national- and district-level racial integration initiatives (Howlett, 1993).

During the early years of the education reform movement, superintendents' acuity for deftly handling special interest group influence on decision-making processes became a hallmark of highly effective superintendents (Björk & Lindle, 2001; Cuban,1976a; Kowalski, 1995). Glass and colleagues (2000) found that 58% of surveyed superintendents acknowledged attempts by special interest groups to influence district-level decisions while 83% identified school-board relations (i.e., micropolitics) as a significant challenge for them. A decade later, superintendents ranked their role as democratic statesman and political leader as fourth among their several roles (Kowalski et al., 2011). In current circumstances, the issue is not whether superintendents enact a political role but how well they do it (Björk & Gurley, 2005; Kirst & Wirt, 2009).

## Micropolitics

In general, the term *politics* refers to how the allocation of resources is accomplished within a nation, state, or organization, or simply who gets what, when, and how (Laswell, 1936/2011). Macropolitics and micropolitics provide a framework for understanding two separate yet related levels of political activity that encompasses both conflict and cooperative decision-making processes. On the one hand, macropolitics describes the influence by global, national, or state entities responsible for provision of public education by national and state governments that work with and through municipal, private sector entities, and school-districts (Blase, 1998; Blase & Björk, 2009; Cibulka, 2001; Willower, 1991). In general, the notion of *macropolitics* affirms the interdependence, enduing differences, and power relations that accompany formation of a broad sense of purpose for national education policy.

On the other hand, the notion of *micropolitics* is often regarded as the central mechanism through which major organizational outcomes related to school-district change and reform are produced. In other words, micropolitical processes are situated within an organization's political culture (Ball, 1987, 1994; Blase & Björk, 2009). Blase and Blase (2002) persuasively argue that

> *an organization's political processes, for example, a school's formal and informal (e.g., organizational stakeholders and their power sources, interests, ideologies, and interchanges) as well as its political culture (e.g., patterns of interests, ideologies, decision making, power distribution) dramatically influence most school outcomes, including teaching and learning. The degree to which political processes and political culture account for a given outcome (e.g., decision, policy, program, practice, events) varies, of course, from one school to another and, over time, within the same school. (p.10)*

Boyd (1991) observed that those responsible for local policy implementation—typically district staff, principals, and teachers who Lipsky (2010) calls street-level bureaucrats—may reshape or even resist policy intentions promulgated by national and state governments, school boards, or municipal school governing boards. In this regard, the concept of micropolitics provides a useful way to

understand the differences between macropolitical intent and local implementation, which Mawhinney (1999) termed an "implementation dip" (p. 10). In many instances, externally imposed educational reforms are often accompanied by ambiguity, uncertainty, or resistance, which means that superintendents must possess the acuity to handle political dynamics within municipal governments, school boards, district offices, and parent organizations (Björk, 2000; Björk, Kowalski, & Young, 2005; Goldring & Greenfield, 2002).

During the past several decades, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have recognized the importance of education to their economic wellbeing. As a consequence, they engaged in intensive efforts to improve the quality of learning and teaching, implement accountability measures, and promote the devolution of governance and decision-making to a wide array of education providers. Scholars acknowledge that in large measure the success of policy implementation is highly dependent on the political acuity of superintendents in working with principals, classroom teachers, and parents. Examining findings from recent nationwide studies about education reform in these countries may contribute to a broader understanding the centrality of the micropolitical role of superintendents. The following sections provide brief overviews of policy issues and solutions advanced by these Nordic countries and implications for superintendents moving from conventional managerial roles in municipal governments to micropolitical-engagement roles with broad-based stakeholders.

**Educational Reform in Sweden**

The emergence of the superintendecy in Sweden developed in response to multiple and diverse social, economic, and political forces organized under different entities and forms of control that included church, national and municipal levels. By the mid-1950s, a combination of political responsibility for education and strong central professional control had laid the foundation for the nation's

education system. In many ways, the emergence of the superintendency in Sweden mirrored concerns for national economic and social wellbeing of is citizens and unfolded in three broad eras. The first, designated as the pre-superintendent era, reflects historical events leading up to passage of the Education Act of 1958. During the second or formative era (1958-1990), the superintendent position was introduced and regulated by the Education Act of 1958, which defined how the nation's educational system was organized, administered, and governed. During the third or decentralization era (1991-present), the national government and municipalities made decisions about organizing, governing, and administering schools that required superintendents not only to serve as municipal managers but also to possess political acuity essential for navigating ideological and partisan turmoil surrounding policy debates. They also had to work collaboratively with municipal administrators and school principals in implementing the nation's new educational system. The nature and direction of their work during this era was the focus of a recent nationwide study reported by (Johansson & Nihlfors, 2014).

During the late 1980s, perceptions among members of the major political parties in Sweden were in accord with the conviction that the state-centric system had failed its children and the nation's economy. There was a broad-based consensus that in order to advance the nation's future economic wellbeing, policymakers had to reform the then-existing centralized public education system. These education reform initiatives were launched during a time (1994-2006) when Sweden was experiencing an economic downturn; partisan politics was contentious with shifting control of Parliament between left- and right-wing political factions periodically offering different education policy options. These political power swings within Parliament also created considerable tension between national and local municipal governments that in turn triggered reactions by educators and local school boards responsible for implementing reforms.

Findings from the Swedish research project, *National Policy Meets Local Implementation Structures* (Johansson & Nihlfors, 2014), heighten understanding of policy shifts that unfolded over several recent years, particularly with regard to the changing nature of superintendents roles in the post-1989 era. The research report shows that the Education Act of 2010 and the revised Education Act (SFS 2010:800) of 2011 shifted education authority from the national to the municipal level, increased principals' management responsibilities, and made teachers accountable for student academic performance. Further, the new legislation not only expanded parent participation on school boards but also empowered them to exercise their option to enroll their children in publically financed independent schools (Holmgren, Johansson, Nihlfors, & Skott, 2012; Johansson & Nihlfors, 2014).

Findings reported by Johansson and Nihlfors (2014) also describe the devolution of education authority and provide insight into Swedish superintendents' perspectives on parent involvement. Although municipal-level school board chairpersons and superintendents serve as public administrators and appropriately assume a neutral stance on governance matters, they view parents as a political interest group that influences the school board decision-making processes. Indeed, the level of parent activity within the education decision-making processes in Sweden is significantly related ($r$ = .397, $p$ < .001) and evidences how much influence is ascribed to parents by school-board chairpersons and superintendents. Although parents are viewed as an influential interest group, strict compliance with provisions of the Education Act may be circumvented by structural barriers like regular routines and limited distribution of information as well as by parent role ambiguity (Kristofferson, 2007, 2008). Taken together, these structural impediments enable those in power to keep it (Johansson & Nihlfors, 2014), thus adding fuel to the criticisms that the Education Act's intent to encourage greater parent representation is being circumvented.

Throughout this period, new education reform legislation required municipal superintendents and school administrators to interpret and implement initiatives that were often controversial if not indifferently received by local school staffs. Johansson and Nihlfors (2014) also report that superintendents rank ordered the most critical tasks are (1) creating conditions that enhance student performance on national tests et cetera, (2) developing and implementing local initiatives and reforms, and (3) developing and implementing national reforms all of which are directly related to implementing Sweden's Education Act SFS 2010:800. Another interesting finding from the recent study is a nearly equal balance among superintendents who viewed themselves as being embedded in the policymaking process (30%), those who saw themselves as both policymakers and administrators (30%), and those who viewed their role solely as administrators responsible for policy implementation. A majority of superintendents (88%) reported perceiving that they are a part of the policymaking processes, evidenced by their working closely with their school-board chair to explain learning programs and develop policymaking strategies. This suggests superintendents play a key role in mediating education policy at the municipal level of government. Taken together, these reforms transformed the traditional management-oriented role of superintendents into a new collaborative-leadership role requiring them to serve as members of municipal management teams, provide support for implementing educational reforms, working with new school-level governance structures, and mediating municipal education policy initiatives.

Because municipalities determine how education is administered and governed, the work of contemporary Swedish superintendents varies widely in accordance with local contexts, culture, and politics. In addition, a wide array of stakeholders and interest groups has heightened the intensity of the political environment. Findings from the 2009 nationwide study of Swedish superintendents (Johansson & Nihlfors, 2014) reveal a wide array of new roles enacted by superintendents—particularly one related to micropolitical

engagement. This is most evident in their role as mediators between (a) political and municipal administrative managers and (b) educational practitioners while engaged in school-district policymaking processes. In serving as mediators, gatekeepers, and policy implementers, Swedish superintendents work with and through others to accomplish national policy and municipal education services.

**Educational Reform in Finland**

Since the late 1960s, educational reform in Finland has been closely linked to global economic competition, political renewal, and social development (Sahlberg, 2010) focused on ensuring that its children are prepared to compete in a global economy. Their success in skillfully navigating these hazardous waters contributed to their formulating a set of national policies that redefined its education system that is widely regarded as one of the most effective in the world. Findings from a national study of the superintendency reported by Risku and colleagues (2014) suggest however that a recent economic downturn, demographic shifts, municipal mergers, and protracted ideological debates have influenced continuous improvement of Finnish schools. These events likewise contributed to transforming Finnish superintendents' role from that of a management-oriented, bureaucratic functionary to a member of an executive management team with political acuity to accomplish increasingly complex work.

Education in Finland is provided by municipalities that have constitutional autonomy with regard to how they structure, organize, govern, and lead school districts. Historical provisions for modern Finnish municipal administration can be traced back to two important Parliamentary Acts, one in 1865 and the other in 1872, that required municipalities to establish their own local governments, provide for the delivery of basic education, and establish municipal-level school boards (Kuikka, 1992; Pihlajanniemi, 2006; Salmela, 1949). Later, both the 1945 School Board Act and 1968 Basic Education

Act affirmed the requirement that municipalities convene school boards and create an office of the superintendent to manage schools and implement education changes. The 1968 Act affirmed that the national government set education policy and student-learning objectives and simultaneously decentralized the provision of education services to municipal governments. They were held accountable for implementing national education reforms through assigning strategic planning, administration, evaluation, and reporting requirements to municipal school boards to be centrally administered by superintendents and their qualified staffs (Aho, Pitkänen, & Sahlberg, 2006; Isosomppi, 1996; Risku, 2011; Sarjala, 1982, 2008; Varjo, 2007).

Since the late 1960s, Finland has struggled with unprecedented demographic, financial, and ideological debates that changed its national system of education and altered municipal responsibilities and the role of superintendents. For example, according to demographic data (Statistics Finland, 2013), Finland's population is aging at a more rapid rate than in any other country in the European Union (EU). Since the 1960s, the population has been migrating to towns, metropolitan areas, and urban centers (Aro, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2007; Peltonen, 2002; Statistics Finland, 2007). While rural communities experienced a steady decline in population, urban areas experienced rapid increases in birth rates, which lead to school closings in rural areas and school openings in urban areas (Statistics Finland, 2013). Consequently, policymakers faced a conundrum as to how to provide equitable social services and education throughout the nation.

In the early1990s, one of the most severe economic recessions in recent history decreased the nation's gross domestic product by 12%, increased unemployment by 15%, and expanded the national debt by 700%. The recession fundamentally altered how the state financially supported its municipal-based education system (Aho et al., 2006; Peltonen, 2002). Before the recession the government's financial transfer system provided 70-80% of the actual operating costs of

municipal basic education. By 1993, Parliament had changed the funding formulae and reduced state subsidies for municipal education by almost 50% (Aho et al., 2006; Souri, 2009). The decline in financial support from the state called for greater efficiencies and became a primary driving force for the rise in municipal strategic planning and managerialism (Kanervio & Risku, 2009).

The confluence of demographic changes and declining national support for a wide array of public services contributed to citizens favorably viewing municipal mergers as a viable solution to the delivery of a wide array of social and educational services in the country. To place this phenomenon in historical perspective, in 1945 there were 558 municipalities in Finland but by 2013 there were only 320 (Local Finland, 2013). In their study of Finnish superintendents, Kanervio and Risku (2009) found that they considered demographic changes as one of the most significant factors influencing the nature and direction of their work. Because they have primary responsibility for leading and managing the provision of education in merged municipalities, the intensity and complexity of superintendents' work has increased.

These dramatic changes were accompanied by protracted ideological debates that in many respects changed Finnish society and influenced educational reforms. Three are particularly noteworthy: *neoliberalism*, *democratic individualism*, and *managerialism*. Neoliberalism is regarded as a political philosophy endorsed by those who support the shift towards economic liberalization including free trade, privatization, and deregulation that translates into an expansion of the role of the private sector in society. Neoliberal theory promotes a market economy under the guidance and rules of a strong state (Harvey, 2005). Neoliberal ideology basically advances the notion of students' right to select their school from among those available in the municipal system or in the private sector (Laitila, 1999). Democratic individualism argues against state centralization and for empowering municipalities and individuals to make decisions that directly affect their lives. Democratic individualism has

influenced changes in Finland since the 1970s (Ryynänen, 2004), particularly with regard to reconfiguring the relationship between national and municipal governments in which the latter are given greater responsibility for education (Niemelä, 2008) that enables them to reconfigure the role of superintendents in different school-district organizations (Ryynänen, 2004). Managerialism is grounded in an industrial-era ideal of achieving operational efficiencies (Enteman, 1993) through top-down decision making, strategic planning, data analysis, and rigid implementation frameworks.

Taken together, neoliberalism, democratic individualism, and managerialism grounded the Finnish parliamentary acts and provided a framework of strategies to approach greater municipal autonomy, reductions in state support, and discretion in how to use competition to allocate scarce resources among service sectors. Although efforts to advance the notion of decentralization in Finland were notable, the role of the central government in education remained an equally prominent feature of its political system. Municipalities were expected to implement legislatively mandated educational reforms and meet accountability standards (Aho et al., 2006; National Board of Education, 2013; Souri, 2009). In order to restructure municipal governments, implement mergers, institute national educational reforms, and meet education accountability standards, municipal councils and executive boards began to hire superintendents who were well educated and had teaching and administrative experience and whose thinking aligned with municipal strategies (Kanervio & Risku, 2009). Since the 1990s, demographic shifts, economic changes, and parliamentary education reform acts have altered the provision of education and the role of superintendents. Accomplishing work in this milieu requires superintendents to have greater managerial competency, strategic-thinking abilities, and acuity for micropolitics.

**Education Reform in Norway**

Findings from nationwide studies of the Norwegian education between 1990 and 2008 as well as more recent work by Paulsen (2012) provides insight into educational reform in Norway and the multifaceted role of school district superintendents. During the past several decades, Norwegian primary and lower secondary schools have been criticized for mediocre student academic performance in literacy, mathematics, and science as reported by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] in their Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) studies (Kjærnsli, Lie, Olsen, & Turmo, 2004; Välijärvi, 2006; Välijärvi, Linnakylä, Kupari, & Arffman, 2002). Policymakers enacted a wide range of educational reforms directed towards improving academic programs, implementing accountability measures, and expanding parent involvement to enhance student academic performance. These reforms generated a significant level of tension between national and local education agencies (Paulsen, 2012).

Norway has a three-level school governance system with each level having a legitimate power base and formal authorities (Møller, Prøitz, & Aasen, 2009). First, there are 428 municipalities between the state level and the school level that constitutes the operational education core (Johansson, Moos, Nihlfors, Paulsen, & Risku, 2011). Decision makers and leaders at each of the three levels exert some degree ofinfluence on policy- and decision-making processes that impact how schools are managed and lead. These circumstances create a complex system that influences superintendent's work (Nihlfors, 2003; Nihlfors, Johansson, Moos, Paulsen, & Risku, 2013), which has become multifaceted. Essentially, Norwegian superintendents are characterized by Paulsen (2014) as being middle managers who accomplish work by spanning boundaries using diverse strategies including serving as mediators, gatekeepers, coordinators, advocates, and liaisons to accomplish their work. Taken together, these ways of doing work require different skill sets and the capacity to understand and apply the principles of micropolitics.

Thompson's (1967) definition of middle management makes a distinction between three levels of the organization including the technical (operational), managerial (administrative), and institutional (strategic). In this regard, middle managers "perform a coordinating role where they mediate, negotiate, and interpret connections between the organization's institutional (strategic) and technical (operational) level" (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997, p. 466). As such, a manager's mediating role encompasses the exertion of influence downwards as well as upwards in the organization (March & Simon, 1958; Pappas, Flaherty, & Wooldridge, 2003). In addition, middle managers also operate at the external boundaries of the organizations by interacting with customers (Thompson, 1967), stakeholders (Mintzberg, 1993), and community citizens (Busher, 2006). Superintendents are characterized as being middle managers (Paulsen, 2014) who conduct their work by spanning internal as well as external organizational boundaries. As such, they play an important role in linking different internal functional units and aligning them with important external environments (Tushman & Katz, 1980). Effective utilization of boundary spanning opportunities by superintendents may contribute to the organization's learning capacity and enable them to exert greater influence in policy and decision-making processes (Paulsen, 2014).

Superintendents as middle managers play key roles as mediators working at the external boundaries of the organization to facilitate interaction between those on the inside and interest parties or stakeholders on the outside (Mintzberg, 1993). Their day-to-day practices help link the organization with the external environment through four distinct forms of mediation: gatekeeping, coordination, advocacy and liaison (Paulsen, 2008, 2014). The gatekeeper function suggests that superintendents perform as internal brokers who have position power to select and protect against other members of the same system (Tushman & Katz, 1980). As gatekeepers, they may select from the flow of external information what issues are most relevant and pressing that will be considered by the group (DiPaolo

& Tschannen-Moran, 2005). Second superintendents serve as municipal coordinators or change intermediaries (Paulsen, 2014) who help colleagues make sense out of complex situations in support of change initiatives (Balogun, 2003). In many instances, the term *sense giving* is used to heighten attention to superintendents role in facilitating learning and creating conditions for staffs to adopt new ideas or practices and to find alternative solutions (Balogun, 2003, p.70).

The third mediating function assumed by superintendents is advocacy (Gould & Fernandez, 1989) in which they represent one internal group while engaging with other groups within the organizational hierarchy. Paulsen's (2012, 2014) findings indicate that Norwegian superintendents provide key information in decision-making processes and agenda-setting functions of municipal school boards. Their specialized knowledge of specific domains within education serve as a primary source of influence, help mobilize resources, and is viewed by other politicians as having the strongest influence among members included in decision-making processes (Paulsen, 2012). A fourth mediating function of the superintendent is their serving as a liaison between groups in and across organizations or in professional networks. In this role superintendents may exert influence upwards and downwards in the hierarchy (Pappas et al., 2003). Conditional trust (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981) enables them to successfully mediate in conflicts and accomplish work.

Study findings reported by Paulsen (2014) underscore the importance of the local, municipal level of Norway's school governance system within the policy-implementation process. Findings also suggest a pattern of mediation by superintendents who serve in middle management positions in Norway's municipal school system. In other words, when national education policies reach municipalities, superintendents mediate or reinterpret them to fit local priorities. In essence, superintendents actively filter out, buffer, and translate national policies in their daily interactions with school principals and others within the community. In retrospect,

understanding the role of superintendents as middle managers—particularly how they exert social and political influence upwards as well as downwards in an organization or professional network—suggests the importance of superintendents' having micropolitical perspectives in describing how they accomplish work. Moreover, the role content, leadership functions, and influence patterns of superintendents as middle managers in large complex organizations provides insight into how microplitics may be enacted in a Norwegian educational reform context.

**Educational Reform in Denmark**

Global competition and widespread collaboration among European countries stimulated an educational reform movement that profoundly affected education in all Nordic countries. The shift away from traditional democratic, public sector systems towards new, corporate-oriented and market-driven management models have fundamentally altered Demarks education system. National educational reform policies not only created schools as freestanding institutions that are managed directly by the Ministry of Education rather than municipalities but also created local parent-dominated school boards that expanded their involvement and voice. These changes replaced a traditional, professional model of educational administration with state-centric, bureaucratic management that relies on social technologies such as strategic planning, quality standards, student academic testing and reporting, and school comparisons (Moos, 2014).

Over the past four decades, Denmark moved away from social-welfare state policies towards those that promised long-term economic survival. Moos (2014) notes that transnational agencies (e.g., EU, General Agreement on Tariff and Trade, International Monetary Fund, OECD, World Trade Organization, World Bank) acted as key driving forces in Europe's response to globalization through adoption of neoliberal economic perspectives (i.e., deregulation, privatization, outsourcing). Many of the central tenets

of neoliberalism were embedded in Denmark's education acts. The Consolidation Act on Folkeskolen (1993) affirmed that the purpose of schooling in Denmark is to prepare students to be productive individuals and continue the nation's democratic form of government. However, a dramatic shift in Denmark's core values is evidenced in the 2006 Act on the Folkeskolen (Consolidation Act No. 170) that describes the purpose of schooling as developing a competent workforce (Bovbjerg, 2009; Moos, 2014). Concurrent with adoption of these neoliberal economic perspectives was putting into practice a New Public Management (NPM) model (Hood, 1991) for organizing and administering public education that was unambiguously tied to private sector notions of competition, consumer choice, and managerial efficiency. The most conspicuous examples include the adoption of school choice in daycare and Folkescole attendance, upper secondary schools, and autonomous schools across Denmark. Policy re-centralization was accompanied through promulgation of uniform rules, regulations, and policies and a top-down accountability system aligned with national goals.

Although Denmark recentralized its policymaking processes, it decentralized many aspects of its decision-making processes giving municipalities and schools greater control over many aspects of the education delivery system. For example, principals and teachers were given more control over curriculum, accountability, budgets, and staffing as well as day-to-day administration. In addition, the Ministry of Education gave municipalities a greater role in implementing the required quality assurance system that is a central feature of its NPM model. In effect, municipalities are expected to manage schools using national goals and objectives and assessment frameworks developed by Parliament and government ministries. For example, the 2006 Amendment Act on the Folkeskole (Consolidation Act No. 170), also known as the "aim" clause, instituted a system of education that expanded choice, parent voice, and a battery of accountability tools (i.e., social technologies). However, municipalities were allowed a measure of discretion in

determining how their schools were organized, administered, and governed and given freedom to make decisions about budgets, facilities, and personnel.

In Denmark, municipal school superintendents are viewed as being key players in implementing the new national quality assurance system. However, numerous changes in public sector governance implemented in Denmark over the past two decades make it difficult to provide a coherent description of their positions, roles, and responsibilities. In the decades before Denmark's educational reform movement, superintendents were situated in a direct line of governance authority that flowed from the transnational level agencies (EU) to the national level (Parliament) to the government administrative level (Ministry of Education) to the municipal levels and then to the institutional (school) level. The first municipal level includes the municipal council (political committee) and municipal administration, whereas the second municipal level includes a school committee and the superintendent of schools. The last level is the school, which has a school board with a parent majority and a professional staff (e.g., principals, teachers, educational specialists). The superintendent, who is situated in the middle of the education chain of command, is accountable to municipal authorities and is expected to comply with national rules, regulations, and policies concurrently with administering the local district school.

Recent educational reforms in Denmark provide a measure of insight into the impact of the global economy and its transition towards a new competitive, market-oriented state. Scholars also note that neoliberal policy changes altered the nation's education system by creating a homogenized public-sector system that uses private-sector strategies. The state is using contracts to accomplish national standards and accountability; although critics argue that this may be viewed as an effort to re-centralize government, others note that it also supports decentralization. Unquestionably, these new policy initiatives have altered traditional education structures, changed the

nature of public education discourses, and re-defined the relationships between state, local authorities, and schools. As local schools have been restructured, new forms of administration have emerged that in turn are redefining relations between politicians and school professionals. The most evident shift at the municipal level is the changing roles of superintendents and principals—from serving as educators to working as corporate contract managers. Implementation of this new model of education has created political tensions between policymakers and school professionals, heightened ambiguity, and generated the need for greater political acuity at all levels of the new education system to accomplish routine work.

## Discussion

During the past 30 years, the rise of the global economy stimulated a wide array of social, economic, and political changes within the Nordic countries. Heightened concern about the quality of schools launched what is arguably one of the most intense and protracted attempts at educational reform because the education reforms challenged fundamental assumptions about how schools are organized, governed, and lead. Findings from nationwide studies on the superintendency in Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Denmark provide important insights into changes in political ideology, devolution of responsibility for education, and transformation of the nature of superintendents' leadership. An important theme that emerged from these nationwide studies is the centrality of superintendent leadership to the success of implementing national educational reforms and how extensively the position itself is changing. Complex policy environments that characterize educational reform in the Nordic countries are redefining how and where superintendents complete their work. It is evident that as Nordic countries devolved responsibility for school district operations to municipalities and held them accountable for school improvement, the role of superintendents shifted away from serving

as managers to becoming team members who help colleagues interpret and implement complex national policies. They not only mediated the effects of policy changes within the districts and schools but also by necessity became more politically astute as they worked with and through others to accomplish national goals. Björk and Blase (2009) persuasively argue that micropolitics is a critical dimension of superintendent leadership and that it serves as a central mechanism through which education policies are implemented at the local level. They observe that a school district's political culture (i.e., patterns of interest, ideology, decision making, and power distribution) and stakeholders (i.e., their ideologies, interests, power sources, and networks) exert a powerful influence on how education reforms are implemented. Although political cultures and processes vary across the Nordic countries as well as districts and municipalities within them, most superintendents have acuity for politics, understand ideological differences, and are aware of interest groups activities that accompanied these policy changes. These circumstances increased the scope, intensity, and complexity of their work. For example, Norwegian superintendents acted as mediators to alleviate resistance to change. Their counterparts in Sweden and Finland became part of municipal management teams, and new funding patterns forced them to compete for scarce resources with other social service providers—thus heightening their recognition of the need to work with political interest groups. Finally, Danish superintendents were compelled to handle widespread disaffection of their staffs with national ideological, market-oriented education policies. Although many superintendents in the Nordic countries tend to be cautious about disclosing their political dispositions, most concur that they do not have a choice as to whether they are engaged in politics but only how they will participate.

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# Book Review
# Educational Leadership: Culture and Diversity[1]

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**Book Review**

Over the past several decades, fairly extensive research has been conducted on educational leadership, as it has been identified as an integral determinant of school capacity and school effectiveness. Notwithstanding the substantial progress in theory building that has established and consolidated educational leadership as an important scholarly field in education, there has been little discussion about the possibility that educational leadership may vary in terms of its manifestations and effects. Most debates in educational leadership have tended to evolve in universal terms without close analytic attention to the cultural context in which the notion of leadership is shaped and its practice exercised.

In their book, *Educational leadership: Culture and diversity*, Clive Dimmock and Allan Walker inquire into educational leadership in relation to culture, especially from an international comparative perspective. As they succinctly state on the first page of the book, "Educational leadership is a socially bounded process. It is subject to

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the cultural traditions and values of the society in which it is exercised. … It thus manifests itself in different ways in different settings" (p. 1). Throughout the book, they advance and elaborate three central propositions—first, "leadership is a culturally and contextually bounded process [that is] inextricably intertwined with its larger environment;" second, "the cultural influence on leadership is multidimensional, often difficult to discern, subtle and easy to overlook;" third, understanding "leadership [in terms of its nexus to] cultural and contextual influences … can lead to improvement in [leadership] practice" (pp. 3-4).

As a unique work on educational leadership that combines conceptual and research-based ideas with practical implications, the book is organized into twelve chapters in addition to an opening overview. Chapters 1 to 3 provide conceptual foundations and highlight the importance of considering societal culture as a factor influencing the ways in which educational leadership is construed and exercised. These chapters argue that cultural understanding, both cross-cultural and multicultural, will help educators and researchers contextualize their perspectives on leadership, as it can provide useful insights offering culture-sensitive implications for school improvement. Chapters 4 and 5 remind us that educational leadership is deeply nested in multiple layers of cultural context, including organizational culture and societal culture. These chapters look into such different yet intertwined levels of cultural context within which educational leadership takes place as a culture-bound activity. Chapters 6 to 9 expand the book's cultural perspective, applying it to some of the key aspects of leadership in schools, including strategic leadership, instructional leadership, staff management, and teacher appraisal, either with reference to different cultures or in the context of culturally diverse settings. Chapters 10 and 11 advance discussions further with respect to managing leadership dilemmas as well as exerting effective leadership for multicultural education. Finally, chapter 12 concludes the book with a summary of the key points and implications for future research.

Without hesitation, we believe that this book is an excellent work that provides valuable implications for a wide range of audiences in the field of education, especially in relation to educational policy and leadership. Most influential theories and conceptualizations of educational leadership have tended to evolve in the context of Western, mostly Anglo-American, societies, and those developments have been imported to other parts of the world rather uncritically. In the process of diffusion and/or transplantation of certain conceptual models of educational leadership across different parts of the world, the validity of the imported models has rarely been questioned, and systematic efforts have rarely been made toward a careful reassessment and recontextualization of the models.

The book's substantial reference to and careful reinterpretation of Geert Hofstede's research works on cross-cultural perspectives on organizational behavior and management is both its strength and its weakness. Classifying countries into several cultures—Geert Hofstede has produced seminal works in this respect—can naturally provide researchers with rare opportunities to make the familiar unfamiliar from a broader sociological perspective. However, as Clive Dimmock and Allan Walker are also aware, such cultural categorization may accompany the danger of overgeneralization or essentialization, often misleading us to attribute some essential and fixed characteristics to the members of certain cultural groups or societies. Conceptual and methodological complexities arising from the use and misuse of such a cultural approach to comparative research could have been discussed further in the book.

In sum, there is no doubt that Clive Dimmock and Allan Walker have made a significant contribution to the literature on educational leadership. The book draws attention to the analytic importance of revisiting the notion of educational leadership from cross-cultural and multicultural perspectives on schooling and society. The book's cultural perspective is truly valuable, as it reminds us that "if the field of educational leadership and management is to develop methodologically and analytically, it must take greater cognizance of

the diversity and characteristics of context and culture within which leaders function" (p. 205).

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