Leading Educational Change: reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership

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ABSTRACT   *Over the past two decades, debate over the most suitable leadership role for principals has been dominated by two conceptual models: instructional leadership and transformational leadership. This article reviews the conceptual and empirical development of these two leadership models. The author concludes that the suitability or effectiveness of a particular leadership model is linked to factors in the external environment and the local context of a school. Moreover, the paper argues that the definitions of the two models are also evolving in response to the changing needs of schools in the context of global educational reforms.*

INTRODUCTION

The past 25 years have witnessed the emergence of new conceptual models in the field of educational leadership. Two of the foremost models, as measured by the number of empirical studies, are instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). In contrast with many earlier leadership models applied to school administration (e.g. situational leadership, trait theories, contingency theory), these models focus explicitly on the manner in which the *educational* leadership exercised by school administrators and teachers brings about improved educational outcomes (e.g. Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999b; Southworth, 2002).

Instructional leadership models emerged in the early 1980s from early research on effective schools. This body of research identified *strong, directive leadership focused on curriculum and instruction from the principal* as a characteristic of elementary schools that were effective at teaching children in poor urban communities (Edmonds, 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Although not without its critics (e.g. Cuban, 1984; Miskel, 1982), this model shaped much of the thinking about effective principal leadership disseminated in the

1980s and early 1990s internationally. Moreover, the emerging popularity of this model, at least in the USA, soon became evident from its widespread adoption as the 'model of choice' by most principal leadership academies (Hallinger, 1992; Hallinger & Wimpelberg, 1992).

With the advent of school restructuring in North America during the 1990s, scholars and practitioners began to popularise terms such as shared leadership, teacher leadership, distributed leadership, and transformational leadership. The emergence of these leadership models indicated a broader dissatisfaction with the instructional leadership model, which many believed focused too much on the principal as the centre of expertise, power and authority.

Leadership models in education are subject to the same faddism that is apparent in other areas of education. Today's favourite brand is soon replaced by another. Nonetheless, it is fortunate that over the past 25 years, scholars have subjected both instructional leadership (e.g. Glasman, 1984; Heck, Marcolouides & Larsen, 1990) and transformational leadership (e.g., Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000a; Silins, 1994) to extended empirical study.

As a scholar who has contributed to this literature, I have been challenged time and again to reconcile the theoretical and practical validity of these leadership models. More recently, I was offered the challenge of trying to 'turn a school around', a task that entailed the exercise of leadership. This admittedly unconventional article is a reflection upon the utility of these two leadership models based upon both research and my own practice.

CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Although a variety of conceptual models have been employed over the past 25 years of research into educational leadership, two major approaches have predominated: instructional leadership and transformational leadership. Studies from the early to late 1980s were dominated by an instructional leadership conceptualisation drawn from the effective schools literature (e.g. Andrews & Soder, 1987; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; O'Day, 1983).

As noted above, around 1990 researchers began to shift their attention to leadership models construed as more consistent with evolving trends in educational reform such as empowerment, shared leadership, and organizational learning. This evolution of the educational leadership role has been labelled as reflecting 'second order' changes (Leithwood, 1994) as it is aimed primarily at changing the organization's normative structure. The most frequently used model of this variety has been transformational leadership (e.g. Bass, 1985, 1997; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000b; Silins & Mulford, 2002).

Transformational leadership focuses on developing the organization's capacity to innovate. Rather than focusing specifically on direct coordination, control, and supervision of curriculum and instruction, transformational leadership seeks to build the organization's capacity to select its purposes and to support the development of changes to practices of teaching and learning. Transformational leadership may be viewed as distributed in that it focuses on

developing a shared vision and shared commitment to school change. In this section of the paper I will briefly review what has been learned about each of these models through research conducted over the past 25 years.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The increasing salience of principal instructional leadership during the 1980s did not initially emerge from research conducted on instructional leaders. Instead, the importance of this role of the principal was inferred from studies that examined change implementation (e.g. Hall & Hord, 1987), school effectiveness (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter *et al.*, 1979), school improvement (e.g. Edmonds, 1979) and program improvement (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Scholars conducting research in each of these domains consistently found that the skilful leadership of school principals was a key contributing factor when it came to explaining successful change, school improvement, or school effectiveness.

Conceptualising Instructional Leadership

Prior to 1980, there were neither coherent models nor validated instruments available for the purpose of studying instructional leadership (Bossert *et al.*, 1982; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). This began to change during the early 1980s when several conceptualisations of instructional leadership emerged concurrently (see Andrews *et al.*, 1987; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; van de Grift, 1990).

It is not within the scope of this review to assess competing conceptualisations of the instructional leadership construct. Moreover, since all were rooted in the same literature, it is not surprising to observe that their similarities are greater than their differences. A quick assessment of these most popular conceptualisations of instructional leadership would yield the following observations:

- Instructional leadership focuses predominantly on the role of the school principal in coordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction in the school (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).
- With its birthplace in the 'instructional effective elementary school' (Edmonds, 1979), instructional leadership was generally conceived to be a unitary role of the elementary school principal (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982).
- Similarly, the fact that studies of effective schools focused on poor urban schools in need of substantial change, it is not surprising to note that instructional leaders were subsequently conceived to be 'strong, directive leaders' (Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

- Instructional leaders lead from a combination of expertise and charisma. They are hands-on principals, 'hip-deep' in curriculum and instruction, and unafraid of working with teachers on the improvement of teaching and learning (Cuban, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).
- Instructional leaders are goal-oriented, focusing on the improvement of student academic outcomes. Given the dire straits in which they find their schools, these principals focus on a more narrow mission than many of their peers.
- Instructional leaders are viewed as culture builders. They sought to create an 'academic press' that fosters high expectations and standards for students, as well as for teachers (Mortimore, 1993; Purkey & Smith, 1984).

The most frequently used conceptualisation of instructional leadership was developed by Hallinger (2000). This model proposes three dimensions of the instructional leadership construct: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school-learning climate (Hallinger, 2000). These dimensions are further delineated into ten instructional leadership functions.

Two functions, framing the school's goals and communicating the school's goals, comprise the dimension, defining the school's mission. These functions concern the principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has clear, measurable goals that are focused on the academic progress of its students. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that these goals are widely known and supported throughout the school community. While this dimension does not assume that the principal defines the school's mission alone, it does assume that the principal's responsibility is to ensure that the school has a clear academic mission and to communicate it to staff.

The second dimension, managing the instructional program, focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and curriculum. This dimension incorporates three leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, co-ordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress. These functions, more so than functions in the other two dimensions, require the leader to be deeply engaged in the school's instructional development. In larger schools, it is clear that the principal cannot be the only person involved in leading the school's instructional program. Yet this framework assumes that development of the academic core of the school is a key leadership responsibility of the principal (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

The third dimension, promoting a positive school learning climate, includes several functions: protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, providing incentives for learning. This dimension is broader in scope and intent. It conforms to the notion that effective schools create an 'academic press' through the development of high standards and expectations and a culture of continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of the instructional leadership to align the

school's standards and practices with its mission and to create a climate that supports teaching and learning.

Research Findings on Instructional Leadership

Given the emergent popularity of this leadership model during the early 1980s, scholars subsequently generated a substantial body of international research (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Goldring & Pasternak, 1994; Leitner, 1994). Indeed, in their comprehensive review of research on school leadership and its effects, Hallinger and Heck (1996b) concluded that this was the most common conceptualization of school leadership used during the period of their review of empirical research on school leadership effects (1980–1995). A subsequent review of research focused solely upon instructional leadership found that over 125 empirical studies employed this construct between 1980 and 2000 (Hallinger, 2000).

This body of research has yielded a wealth of findings concerning antecedents of instructional leadership behaviour (school level, school size, school SES), the effects of the school context on instructional leadership (e.g., gender, training, experience), as well as the effects of school leadership on the organization (e.g., school mission and goals, expectations, curriculum, teaching, teacher engagement) and school outcomes (e.g., school effectiveness, student achievement). Again, space limitations make an extended discussion of these findings impractical; interested readers are therefore referred to other relevant sources (Hallinger, 2000; Leithwood *et al.*, 1990; Southworth, 2002). Given the focus of this article, however, I would note the following conclusions from this research on instructional leadership:

- The preponderance of evidence indicates that school principals contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement indirectly through actions they take to influence what happens in the school and in classrooms.
- The most influential avenue of effects concerns the principal's role in shaping the purposes of the school (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Goldring & Pasternak, 1994). The actual role that principals play in mission building is influenced by features of the school context such as socio-economic status and school size (Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).
- Instructional leadership influences the quality of school outcomes through the alignment of school structures (e.g., academic standards, time allocation, curriculum) with the school's mission (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b).
- It is interesting to note that relatively few studies find a relationship between the principal's hands-on supervision of classroom instruction, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). Where effects have been identified, it has generally been

at the elementary school level, and could possibly be a function of school size (Braughton & Riley, 1991; Heck *et al.*, 1990).

- The school context does have an effect on the type of instructional leadership exercised by principals (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). As suggested above, school level as well as the socio-economic status of the school influence the requirements for and exercise of instructional leadership (e.g. Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

Limitations

The influence of the instructional leadership role of principals must be acknowledged. However, it was not and will never be the *only* role of the school principal (Cuban, 1988). Principals play managerial, political, instructional, institutional, human resource, and symbolic leadership roles in their schools (Bolman & Deal, 1992; Cuban, 1988). Critics assert that efforts to limit or even focus narrowly on this single role in an effort to improve student performance will be dysfunctional for the principal (Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1988).

Moreover, as suggested above, instructional leaders must adjust their performance of this role to the needs, opportunities and constraints imposed by the school context. The principal in a small primary school can more easily spend substantial amounts of time in classrooms working on curriculum and instruction. In one effective elementary school that we studied there was a consensus among the teachers that the principal knew the reading level and progress of all 450 students in their school (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). However, this type of direct involvement in teaching and learning is simply unrealistic in a larger school, be it elementary or secondary level.

Context effects on the principal's instructional leadership have also been found with respect to school SES (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Scott & Teddlie, 1987). For example, in one comparative study of effective schools serving high vs. low SES student populations, the researchers concluded that both sets of principals were instructional leaders. However, the form of their leadership was adjusted to the needs of their schools. Principals in the low SES effective schools had clear measurable goals focused on academic achievement of the students. These were known and supported throughout the school and its community. In each of the high SES effective schools, there was a clear academic mission known and supported by staff, students and parents. However, the missions were expressed more broadly and several of the schools did not have any measurable goals at all (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986).

Have We been Able to Create Instructional Leaders?

During the 1980s when instructional leadership emerged as a *model of choice*, numerous scholars questioned the capacity of principals to fulfil this somewhat heroic role. Principals who demonstrated the type of instructional leadership

needed to lift performance in their schools, were by definition a small minority (Barth, 1986). Sceptics wondered if the majority of principals had the necessary combination of 'will and skill' to carry out this type of hands-on, directive leadership (Barth, 1986; Bossert *et al.*, 1982). Others suggested that the very nature of the principalship renders instructional leadership an 'impossible dream' for many principals (e.g. Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1988).

Professor Larry Cuban, a self-described 'friendly critic' of instructional leadership and effective schools described the managerial or maintenance role of the principal as 'embedded in the DNA of the principalship' (Cuban, 1988). He asserted that efforts by principals to act as instructional leaders in schools inevitably run aground against basic structural and normative conditions of the principalship and the school.

For example, principals occupy a middle management position in which their authority to command is severely limited. The limited authority of principals is compounded when considered in light of their need to meet the expectations of those above and below them in the hierarchy. Moreover, any intention to provide instructional leadership, especially in secondary schools, is complicated by the fact that in many cases principals have less expertise than the teachers whom they supervise (Barth, 1990; Lambert, 1998).

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transformational leadership was first elucidated as a theory in the general leadership literature during the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. Bass, 1997; Howell & Avolio, 1993). It found a receptive audience in the educational community during the 1990s as part of a general reaction against the top-down policy-driven changes that predominated in the 1980s. No less, it was also a reaction against the directive imagery encompassed in the instructional model derived from the effective schools research. Considerable research was subsequently conducted in education using the transformational leadership model (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b).

Conceptualising Transformational Leadership

Leithwood and his colleagues have carried out the most substantial adaptation of Bass' (1985) transformational leadership construct into the educational environment. Leithwood's conceptual model has been subjected to extended programmatic investigation over the past decade. This has quite rapidly yielded a knowledge base concerning the application of this leadership model in education (Leithwood *et al.*, 2000b; Silins *et al.*, 2002).

Leithwood's model is summarised in Figure 1. There are seven components to the model: individualised support, shared goals, vision, intellectual stimulation, culture building, rewards, high expectations, modelling. Several features are worth noting about the model.
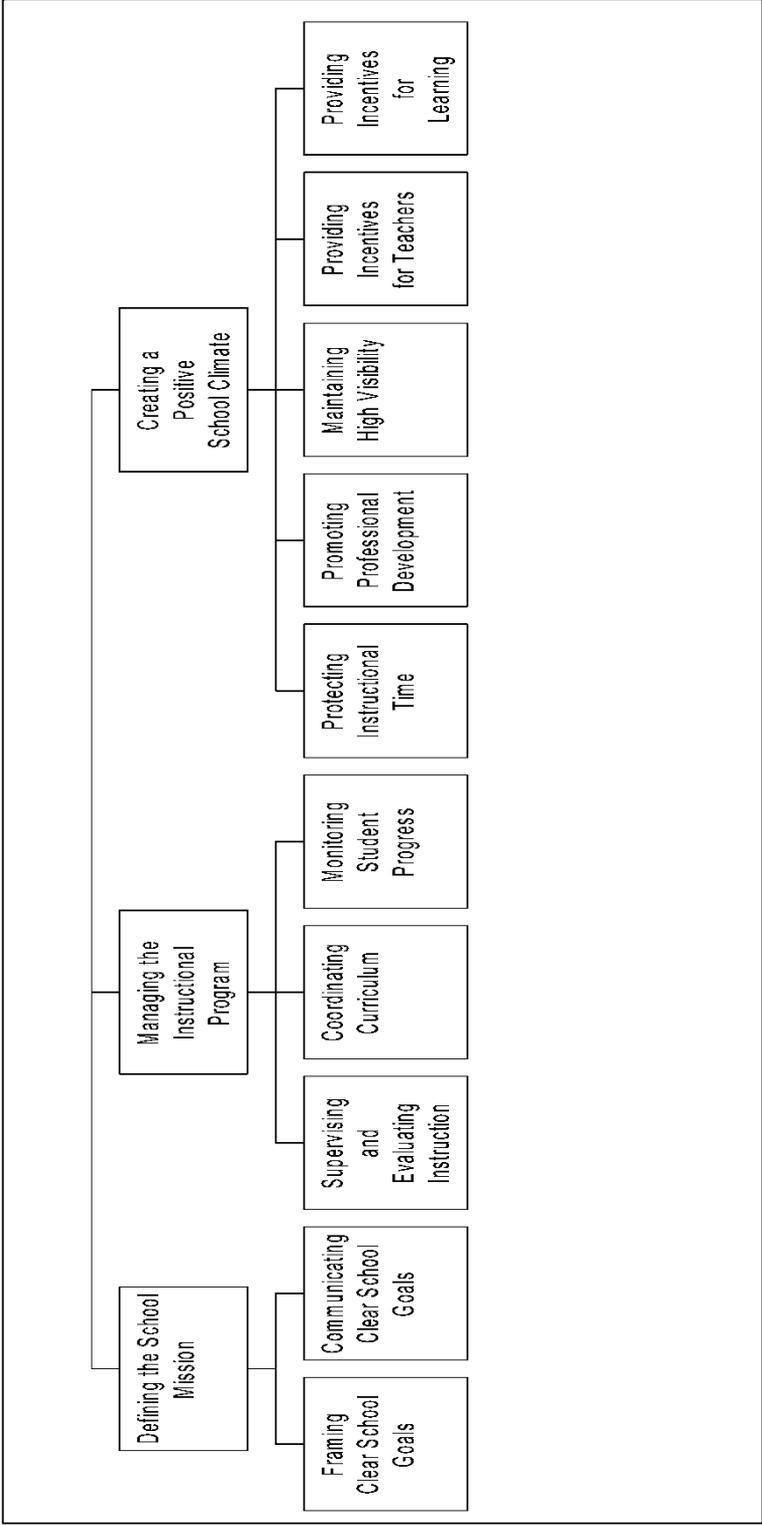
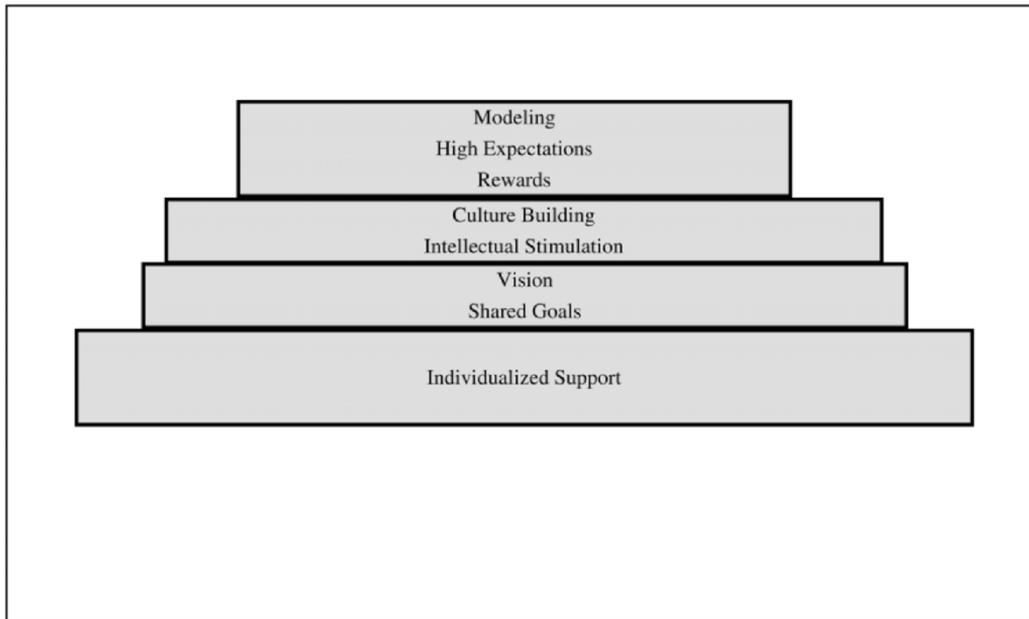FIG. 1. Instructional management framework (from Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

F<small>IG</small>. 2. Transformational leadership model (adapted from Leithwood *et al.*, 1998).

First the model does not assume that the principal alone will provide the leadership that creates these conditions. Leadership may well be shared, coming from teachers as well as from the principal (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000a; Louis & Marks, 1998; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Second, the model starts from somewhat different motivational assumptions. Behavioural components such as individualised support, intellectual stimulation, and personal vision suggest that the model is grounded in understanding the needs of individual staff rather than 'coordinating and controlling' them towards the organisation's desired ends. In this sense the model seeks to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than from the top down.

The conceptual distinctions between the terms *instructional leadership* and *transformational leadership* depend heavily upon the definitions that have evolved over time. Nonetheless, I would suggest that several criteria may be useful in identifying their distinguishing characteristics:

- Top-down vs. bottom-up focus on approach to school improvement.
- First-order or second-order target for change.
- Managerial or transactional vs. transformational relationship to staff.

Instructional leadership has been characterised by some scholars as a directive and top-down approach to school leadership (Barth, 1990; Day *et al.*, 2001). Instructional leadership emphasises the principal's *coordination and control* of instruction (Cohen & Miller, 1980; Heck *et al.*, 1990). The broad brushes

of research on instructional leadership in effective schools produces an image of the principal as directing or orchestrating improvements in the school.

In contrast, transformational leadership is often considered a type of shared or distributed leadership. Rather than a single individual—the principal—coordinating and controlling from above, transformational leadership focuses on stimulating change through bottom-up participation (Day *et al.*, 2001; Jackson, 2000; Marks & Printy, in press). Indeed, transformational leadership models may explicitly conceptualise leadership as an organisational entity rather than the property of a single individual, accounting for multiple sources of leadership.

A second distinction has evolved around the conceptual dichotomy of *transactional vs. transformational leadership* (e.g. Bycio & Allen, 1995; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Silins, 1994). This distinction contrasts leadership that focuses on management of existing relationships and maintenance of the status quo with leadership that seeks to envision and create the future by synthesising and extending the aspirations of members of the organisational community. Accordingly, even though instructional leadership is explicitly focused on school improvement, it would be characterised as transactional in the sense that it seeks to manage and control organisational members to move towards a predetermined set of goals. This debate has largely been resolved. Research has determined that effective leadership requires both transactional and transformational elements.

A third conceptual distinction, clearly related to the first two, contrasts the means by which leadership achieves its effects, through *first-order vs. second order changes in the school.* Instructional leadership is conceptualised as targeting *first-order* variables in the change process. This means that the instructional leader (i.e., the principal) seeks to influence conditions that *directly impact the quality of curriculum and instruction* delivered to students in classrooms (Cuban, 1984, 1988). Examples of instructional leadership behaviours that seek to produce first-order effects include the principal's setting school-wide goals, direct supervision of teaching, and coordination of the curriculum (Hallinger *et al.*, 1996; Leitner, 1994; Marks & Printy, in press).

In contrast, transformational leadership seeks to generate *second-order effects.* Transformational leaders increase the capacity of others in the school to produce first-order effects on learning (Lambert, 1998; Leithwood & Louis, 1999). For example, transformational leaders create a climate in which teachers engage in continuous learning and in which they routinely share their learning with others. Transformational leaders work with others in the school community to identify personal goals and then link these to the broader organisational goals (Barth, 1990; Lambert, 2002). This approach is believed to increase commitment of the staff who see the relationship between what they are trying to accomplish and the mission of the school. These changes are conceived as *second-order* effects in the sense that the principal is creating the conditions under which others are committed and self-motivated to work towards the improvement of the school without specific direction from above.

Research Findings on Transformational Leadership

In a synthesis of several studies of the impact of the principal from a transformational leadership perspective, Leithwood (1994) highlights 'people effects' as a cornerstone of the transformational leadership model. Within the model proposed by Leithwood and colleagues, many of the outcomes of interest in terms of restructuring schools are teacher effects (e.g. changes of behaviour, adoption of new programs, teaching techniques). Thus, as suggested above, the principal's efforts become apparent in the school conditions that produce changes in people rather than in promoting specific instructional practices (e.g., Bottery, 2001; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999a; Mulford & Bishop, 1997).

Leithwood (1994) also found that principal effects are achieved through fostering *group goals*, modelling desired behaviour for others, providing intellectual stimulation, and individualised support (e.g., toward personal and staff development). In these schools, principals were better at supporting staff, providing recognition, knowing problems of school, were more approachable, follow through, seek new ideas, and spent considerable time developing human resources.

The different target for principal leadership is exemplified in a study of the effects of transformational leadership conducted by Leithwood and Jantzi (1999b):

> Transformational leadership had strong direct effects on school conditions (.80) which, in turn, had strong direct effects on classroom conditions (.62). Together, transformational leadership and school conditions explain 17% of the variation in classroom conditions, even though the direct effects of transformational leadership on classroom conditions are negative and non significant. Transformational leadership has a weak (.17) but statistically significant effect on student identification: its effects on student participation are not significant. (p. 467)

Several studies reinforce the conclusion that transformational leadership has an impact on teachers' perceptions of school conditions, their commitment to change, and the organisational learning that takes place (Bogler, 2001; Day *et al.*, 2001; Fullan, 2002). With respect to outcomes, leadership had an influence on teachers' perceptions of progress with implementing reform initiatives and teachers' perceptions of increases in student outcomes.

These observations again focus on two characteristics of transformational leadership: its distributed nature and its targeting of capacity development across a broader spectrum of the school community members. Jackson's (2000) assessment of attempts to development shared transformational leadership in a set of English schools further illuminates these features.

What has emerged from Sharnbrook's work, and that of others within the project, is a set of understandings about a more dispersed leadership model which is opportunistic, flexible, responsive and context-specific, rather than prescribed by roles, inflexible, hierarchical and status-driven. It is a model that

encourages and provides support for a broadly based leadership approach. In these schools in which sustained school improvement has been maintained, and which have learnt from the questioning of fundamental assumptions to which collaborative enquiry gives rise, a new paradigm of leadership seems to have emerged. We can, perhaps, draw three conclusions about leadership from these actively improving school contexts:

- For the long haul of school improvement, school leaders have to develop and expand their leadership repertoires.
- The school improvement journey offers a context for the development of new understandings, both about leadership and about school development.
- The collaborative processes inherent to the enquiry approach to school improvement offer the opportunity for teachers to study, to learn about, to share and to enact leadership.

The work at Sharnbrook and in other schools has allowed us to study more diffuse styles of leadership. The influence of the school improvement group has generated 'shared influence' settings, evolving leadership patterns that are more collaborative, interactive and dynamic—uncertain and exploratory, too! These are not the characteristics readily developed on management training courses, nor do they sit neatly with the competency-based skills training currently being promoted in this country. These are characteristics not even located in one individual. They are characteristics not so much of the leader, but of leadership.

Jackson's conclusions about the development or evolution of shared transformational leadership within the school community also draw attention to other distinguishing characteristics embedded in this model. For instance, he notes that as leadership becomes more diffused within the school, uncertainty may increase rather than decrease. This is a result of more 'voices' (administrators, teachers, parents, staff, students) engaging in the process of providing leadership for school improvement. As Jackson (2000) suggests, transformational leadership requires a higher tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty from the principal, and an ability to live with the messy process of change.

This imagery contrasts with the 'strong leader' imagery encompassed in much of the instructional leadership literature. Indeed, in the classic instructional leadership model, the principal actually seeks to limit uncertainty. S/he does this through the increased coordination and control of curriculum and instruction, even if it may reduce opportunities for exercising voice among others.

Limitations of the Research

A debt is owed to Leithwood and his colleagues for the significant advances in our understanding of transformational leadership gained over the past decade. Programmatic research of this type is too rare in our field. Nonetheless, limitations remain with respect to this knowledge base.

If studying the effects of a single leader on features of the school organis-ation and its outcomes has proven to be a challenging task for scholars (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b), then studying transformational leadership is even more daunting. The transformational leadership construct does not assume that leadership is located in a single individual. Developing valid measures, as well as integrating and interpreting leadership that is distributed across a variety of people requires even greater sophistication. Measurement issues become even more relevant because this body of research has sought to go beyond traditional student achievement outcomes. Studies of transformational leadership are more likely to include outcome variables such as teacher engagement, teacher percep-tions of change and improvement, student engagement with the school (e.g., Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999a, 2000a).

Is Transformational Leadership the Answer to Critiques of Instructional Leadership?

I noted earlier that interest in transformational leadership increased at a time when North American educators began to investigate how to support school restructuring (e.g., Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Sheppard, 1996). The imagery of the American school restructuring movement of the early 1990s was captured in phrases such as *teacher professionalism, learning communities,* and *professional development schools*. Transformational leadership, a conceptual model that had originated in studies of political and corporate leadership, appeared better-suited to the needs of schools as they evolved in the era of restructuring (see Kirby *et al.*, 1992; Kleine-Kracht, 1993).

However, normative beliefs may not be supported by empirical reality. In addition, the cultural context of education not only differs from one nation to another, but the policy context of education continues to evolve. Appropriate forms of leadership must adapt to both (Bottery, 2001; Dimmock & Walker, 2000).

Indeed, Leithwood has gone almost full circle by reprising the issue of how conceptions of 'suitable leadership styles' reflect the latest fad or politically correct notion of schooling. One of his most recent studies examined transfor-mational teacher leadership. The study yielded distinctly disappointing results concerning the contribution of teacher leadership towards a range of variables. These included school conditions that influence classrooms and students, student engagement with the school and student participation in the school (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000b).

Normative conceptions of what is most suitable or correct must be ap-praised in terms of evidence. This is especially true in light of the effort required for a school to move in the direction of empowerment and shared leadership. It does not occur easily, and many studies suggest considerable reluctance among teachers to participate in leading (Bishop & Mulford, 1996; Sheppard & Brown, 1996).

Moreover, the available evidence suggests that transformational leadership is no easier to exercise than instructional leadership. Indeed, Jackson's (2000)

observation concerning the uncertainties that accompany shared leadership should be taken as a cautionary note that the personal capacities associated with transformational leadership may be more difficult to cultivate through training. I was, however, unable to find published empirical data concerning this particular issue.

DISCUSSION

This paper has examined conceptualisations as well as empirical research concerned with the two predominant conceptual models studied in educational leadership over the past 25 years: instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). As a scholar involved in this field since instructional leadership was 'birthed' from research on effective schools, I have witnessed the cyclical popularity of these theories among researchers and practitioners.

The popularity of the instructional leadership construct arose in North America during the 1980s along with that of its progenitor, the effective schools movement. As the top-down emphasis of American school reform gave way to the restructuring movement's attempts to professionalise schools in the early 1990s, transformational leadership overtook instructional leadership as the model of choice. As the 1990s progressed, a mixed mode of educational reform began to evolve, with a combination of top-down and bottom-up characteristics.

At the turn of the century, the global trend in educational reform has refocused to a large degree on the question: How can we bring more powerful methods of learning and teaching to bear on the practice of schools (Hallinger, 2003; Murphy & Shipman, 2003)? Somewhat surprisingly, this refocusing of attention on the improvement of learning and teaching has once again brought instructional leadership to the fore. As noted earlier, there has been an unprecedented global commitment among government agencies towards principal training. Moreover, the focus of much of this training is towards *instructional leadership* (Gewirtz, 2003; Huber, 2003; Stricherz, 2001a, 2001b).

In this final section of the paper, I will reflect upon lessons we have learned about the use of these leadership models by principals in schools. The discussion is organised around three issues:

- Comparing the substantive focus of instructional and transformational leadership models.
- Leadership in the school context.
- Developing leadership capacities.

TOWARDS AN INTEGRATION OF LEADERSHIP MODELS

This review has identified conceptual similarities and differences between instructional and transformational leadership. Table I summarises these findings. Clearly the similarities between the models are more significant than the

differences, at least in terms of the substantive focus of the models (i.e., the focus of the principal's improvement-oriented activities). Both models would have the principal focus on:

- Creating a shared sense of purpose in the school.
- Focus on developing a climate of high expectations and a school culture focused on the improvement of teaching and learning.
- Shaping the reward structure of the school to reflect the goals set for staff and students.
- Organise and provide a wide range of activities aimed at intellectual stimulation and development for staff.
- Being a visible presence in the school, modelling the values that are being fostered in the school.

These similarities between the models provide a useful point of departure for any principal who wishes to reflect upon his/her leadership.

Conceptual differences identified in this review were the:

- Target of change (i.e. first-order or second-order effects).
- The extent to which the principal emphasises a coordination and control strategy vs. an 'empowerment' strategy.
- The degree to which leadership is located in an individual (i.e. instructional leader), or is shared (i.e. transformational).

These differences are most apparent in Table I in the emphasis given in transformational leadership to individualised support for staff and to building organisational goals from the ground up (i.e. out of the personal professional goals of staff and community members). The instructional leadership model is somewhat more 'top-down' with an emphasis on coordinating and controlling others to move towards goals that may have been set at the top of the organisation.

One of the major impediments to effective school leadership is trying to carry the burden alone. When a principal takes on the challenges of going beyond the basic demands of the job (i.e. the transactional tasks of making the school run), the burden becomes even heavier (Barth, 1980; Cuban, 1988). Influential scholars have questioned whether it is realistic to expect any significant number of principals to meet this challenge. Lambert (2002) contends that 'the days of the lone instructional leader are over. We no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for the entire school without the substantial participation of other educators' (p. 37).

Marks and Printy's (forthcoming) research has sought to analyse the extent to which 'shared instructional leadership' is possible. Their conclusion points the way towards one possible avenue of reconciliation for these constructs.

This study suggests that strong transformational leadership by the principal is essential in supporting the commitment of teachers. Because teachers themselves can be barriers to the development of teacher leadership, transformational principals are needed to invite teachers to share leadership functions. When

TABLE I. Comparison of instructional and transformational leadership models (adapted from Hallinger & Murphy, *1985* and Leithwood, *et al.*, *1998*)

Instructional leadership	Transformational leadership	Remarks on differences and similarities
Articulate and communicate clear school goals	Clear vision Shared school goals	I.L. model emphasizes clarity and organizational nature of shared goals, set either by the principal or by and with staff and community. T.L. model emphasizes linkage between personal goals and shared organizational goals.
Coordinate curriculum Supervise and evaluate instruction Monitor student progress Protect instructional time	————	No equivalent elements for these coordination and control functions in the T.L. model. T.L. model assumes others will carry these out as a function of their roles.
————	Individualized support	I.L. model assumes that this will come about through supervision and curriculum coordination. T.L. model views meeting individual needs as a foundation of organization development.
High expectations	High expectations	
Provide incentives for learners Provide incentives for teachers	Rewards	Similar focus on ensuring that rewards are aligned with mission of the school.
Providing professional development for teachers	Intellectual stimulation	I.L model focuses on training and development aligned to school mission. T.L. model views personal and professional growth broadly. Need not be tightly linked to school goals.
High visibility	Modeling	Essentially the same purposes. Principal maintains high visibility in order to model values and priorities.
————	Culture-building	I.L. model also focuses on culture-building, but subsumed within the school climate dimension.

teachers perceive principals' instructional leadership behaviours to be appropriate, they grow in commitment, professional involvement, and willingness to innovate (Sheppard, 1996). Thus, instructional leadership can itself be transformational.

In summary, the integrated view of leadership we propose highlights the synergistic power of leadership shared by individuals throughout the school organisation. We agree with the argument that past understandings of school leadership have failed to meet two functional tests: that leadership promote organisational improvement, and that it is sustainable for the leaders themselves. The study demonstrates the effectiveness of integrated leadership—both transformational and instructional—in eliciting the instructional leadership of teachers for improving school performance. Arguably, principals who share leadership responsibilities with others would be less subject to burnout than principal 'heroes' who attempt the challenges and complexities of leadership alone. When the principal elicits high levels of commitment and professionalism from teachers and works interactively with teachers in a shared instructional leadership capacity, schools have the benefit of integrated leadership; they are organisations that learn and perform at high levels.

CONTINGENCY MODELS LEADERSHIP IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

A second approach to understanding these leadership models lies through contingency theory. At the outset of the effective schools era in 1982, Stephen Bossert and his colleagues made the following observation:

> Like earlier leadership studies ... no single style of management seems appropriate for all schools ... principals must find the style and structures most suited to their own local situation ... a careful examination of quantitative studies of effective schools ... suggests that certain principal behaviours have different effects in different organizational settings. Such findings confirm the contingency approach to organizational effectiveness found in current leadership theories. (Bossert *et al.*, 1982, p. 38)

This prediction has been borne out through subsequent research on instructional leadership. It appears that schools that are in greater need do respond to the type of directive leadership encompassed in the traditional instructional leadership model. This characterisation would include the type of schools highlighted in the early effective schools studies, i.e., poor urban elementary schools. These 'turn around schools' need an urgent stimulus to convert a climate of low expectations into one of success. Moreover, when schools are failing to provide adequate education, there is often a perceived need to produce quick results. 'Strong instructional leadership' is a leadership approach that seems to meet these needs.

At the same time, as Jackson (2000) and Fullan (2002) observe, school improvement is a journey. The type of leadership that is suitable to a certain

stage of the journey may well become a limiting or even counter-productive force as the school develops. This is an example of what Bossert and his colleagues referred to as a contingency model of leadership.

In our review of the literature on principal effects (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b), we concluded that it is virtually meaningless to study principal leadership without reference to the school context. The context of the school is a source of constraints, resources, and opportunities that the principal must understand and address in order to lead. Contextual variables of interest to principals include the student background, community type, organisational structure, school culture, teacher experience and competence, fiscal resources, school size, and bureaucratic and labour organisation.

In our literature review we further concluded that the contingent characteristic of school leadership must also be more explicitly incorporated into theoretical models. The rationale for this was further articulated by Leithwood and Jantzi (1999b):

> Finally, even the most sophisticated quantitative designs used in current leadership effects research (including the one used in this study) treat leadership as an exogenous variable influencing students, sometimes directly, but mostly indirectly, through school conditions, moderated by student background characteristics. The goal of such research usually is to validate a specific form of leadership by demonstrating significant effects on the school organization and on students. The logic of such designs assumes that influence flows in one direction—from the leader to the student, however tortuous the path might be. But the present study hints at a far more complex set of interactions between leadership, school conditions, and family educational culture in the production of student outcomes. (p. 471)

The importance of this observation should not be lost by the reader. Leadership must be conceptualised as a *mutual influence process*, rather than as a one-way process in which leaders influence others. Effective leaders respond to the changing needs of their context. Indeed, in a very real sense the leader's behaviours are shaped by the school context.

Roland Barth (2002) highlights both the principal's impact on the school's culture and the culture's impact on the principal:

> Probably the most important—and the most difficult—job of an *instructional* leader is to change the prevailing culture of a school. The school's culture dictates, in no uncertain terms, 'the way we do things around here.' A school's culture has far more influence on life and learning in the schoolhouse than the president of the country, the state department of education, the superintendent, the school board, or even the principal, teachers, and parents can ever have. One cannot, of course, change a school culture alone. But one can provide forms of *leadership* that invite others to join as observers of the old and architects

of the new. The effect must be to transform what we did last September into what we would like to do next September. (p. 6)

Thus, one resolution of the quest for an appropriate model of leadership in education would be to link the appropriate type of leadership to the needs of the school context. If school improvement is a journey, one could hypothesise that a more directive leadership style might be more suitable in contexts that are less well organised around effective models of teaching and learning. 'Schools-at risk' may initially require a more forceful top-down approach focused on instructional improvement. Instructional leaders would typically set clear, time-based, academically focused goals in order to get the organisation moving in the desired direction. They would take a more active hands-on role in organizing and coordinating instruction.

The extent of appropriate staff participation in *leading* these processes (i.e., development of the school's goals, coordination of the curriculum) might vary depending upon where the location of the school is in its improvement journey. Nonetheless, it is safe to say that long-term, sustained improvement will ultimately depend upon the staff assuming increasing levels of ownership over proposed changes in the school. As suggested earlier, this contingent approach was indicated in our study of effective schools in the USA (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

This conclusion would be consistent with other contingency models that conceptualise leadership as a *developmental* process (e.g. Graeff, 1997). Day and his colleagues (2000) came to a similar conclusion in his own analysis of current leadership models. They recommended the application of, 'contingency leadership which takes into account the realities of successful principalship of schools in changing times, and moves beyond polarised concepts of transactional and transformational leadership' (p. 456). This review comes to a similar conclusion.

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